

\$6

ANYTHING THAT MOVES

No. 20
Summer 1999

The Magazine for the Family Bisexual

Remembering
the Dead

Resources
and Legal
Protections
for the
Alternative
Family

Knight
Moves,
DOMA,
and ENDA



Tears: A First-Person Account of the
San Diego Pride Teargassing

ANYTHING THAT MOVES:

The Magazine for the Family Bisexual

MOVE (MOOV): 1. TO ADVANCE, PROGRESS, OR MAKE PROGRESS. 2. TO CHANGE PLACE OR POSITION. 3. TO TAKE ACTION. 4. TO PROMPT, ACTUATE OR IMPEL INTO ACTION. 5. ACTION TOWARD AN END; A STEP. 6. TO SET IN MOTION; STIR OR SHAKE.

Our choice to use this title for the magazine has been nothing less than controversial. That we would choose to redefine the stereotype that "bisexuals will fuck anything that moves" to suit our own purposes has created myriad reactions. Those critical of the title feel we are perpetuating the stereotype and damaging our image. Those in favor of its use see it as a movement away from the stereotype, toward bisexual empowerment.

We deliberately choose the radical approach. We are creating dialogue through controversy. We are challenging people to face their own external and internal biphobia. We are demanding attention, and are re-defining "anything that moves" on our own terms.

WE WILL WRITE OR PRINT OR SAY *ANYTHING THAT MOVES* US BEYOND THE LIMITING STEREOTYPES THAT ARE DISPLACED ONTO US.

This magazine was created by bisexuals and their friends. All proceeds are invested into its production and the bisexual community. *ATM* was created out of pride; out of necessity; out of anger. We are tired of being analyzed, defined and represented by people other than ourselves — or worse yet, not considered at all. We are frustrated by the imposed isolation and invisibility that comes from being told or expected to choose either a homosexual or heterosexual identity.

Bisexuality is a whole, fluid identity. Do not assume that bisexuality is binary or duogamous in nature: that we have "two" sides or that we *must* be involved simultaneously with both genders to be fulfilled human beings. In fact, don't assume that there are only two genders. Do not mistake our fluidity for confusion, irresponsibility, or an inability to commit. Do not equate promiscuity, infidelity, or unsafe sexual behavior with bisexuality. Those are human traits that cross *all* sexual orientations. Nothing should be assumed about anyone's sexuality — including your own.

We are angered by those who refuse to accept our existence; our issues; our contributions; our alliances; our voice. It is time for the bisexual voice to be heard. Do not expect each magazine to be representative of all bisexuals, for our diversity is too vast. Do not expect a clear-cut definition of bisexuality to jump out from the pages. We bisexuals tend to define bisexuality in ways that are unique to our own individuality.

There are as many definitions of bisexuality as there are bisexuals. Many of us choose not to label ourselves as anything at all, and find the word "bisexual" to be inadequate and too limiting. Do not assume that the opinions expressed are shared by all bisexuals, by those actively involved in the bisexual movement, or by the *ATM* staff.

What you can expect is a magazine that, through its inclusive and diverse nature, creates movement away from external and internal limitations. This magazine is about *ANYTHING THAT MOVES*: that moves us to think; that moves us to fuck (or not); that moves us to feel; that moves us to believe in ourselves —

To Do It For Ourselves!

ANYTHING THAT MOVES

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ANYTHING THAT MOVES

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LOOK, DEAR. CONGRESS SEEMS
WORRIED THAT SAME-SEX
MARRIAGE MIGHT LEAD TO
BISEXUALS GETTING
MARRIED.

THOSE CRAZY GUYS!
YOU'D THINK THEY HAVE NOTICED THE
THOUSANDS OF US WHO ALREADY ARE.



IT'S TIME FOR A TRUE 'FOCUS ON THE FAMILY'

Today is Friday. In a few hours I am going to start preparing dinner. Friday night is *shabbat* for Jews, a night to rest from the week. For many of us, this is also a night of thanks for our loved ones. I never celebrated *shabbat* in my family of origin and I was not raised Jewish, since I am the daughter of a mixed marriage. However, as an adult I am increasingly grateful for the people who share my life. I want to take time out to appreciate them with a good meal, wine and conversation. Tonight at my table will be my best friend and her partner, my boyfriend and our (female) lover. Other nights, other friends join us. With our modest feast, I acknowledge not only this family of choice, but the family who survived to pass on this ritual.

Like many other bisexual families, my family is not always safe or respected because we are different. The Religious Right has co-opted the meaning of "family" in our culture, defining it narrowly as "a mom, a dad, and their kids."

Yet family is much more than that. It is all of those people who share your intimate life. Our families are our lifeblood, literally and figuratively. They provide our life passages with context. They nourish, support and challenge us.

But the Right has one thing right: Family is the cauldron that creates us. However, many of us have realized also that we create our families. This is a dynamic and exciting process, not a stale one-liner, "family values." This is especially true in the queer community, where coming out is not only an individual journey but a family one, too.

When I came out at 18, my parents and I went through the process of separation and reconciliation that so many of us go through. When my parents went through their anger and pain about my sexual orientation, I found my own brood of friends who became family. I have relied on them through moves, career changes, the confusion of young adulthood and my mother's death. They, in turn, have had a loyal friend in me.

As a culture, our network of extended kin has begun to dissolve. We are expected to move for school, jobs, "opportunity," often far away from those we love. This leaves new families without a lot of help when they most need it, without parenting role models or people to turn to for advice. It is no surprise to me that many new mothers suffer from postpartum depression. Raising your beautiful, entirely dependent baby in isolation or trying to combine breast-feeding with almost any job is courting calamity. A 12-week postpartum leave, only for mothers, is abysmal. Many European nations provide paternity leave and maternity leave, some for up to one year with pay and flexible work-time.

Most of the women I worked as a midwife with were heterosexual and in partnerships. For those of us who do not fit this model, there are even fewer societal supports. Yet I see examples of unique and brave families everywhere in our eclectic community.

I approached *Anything That Moves* about this focus more than a year ago. With this issue, I wanted to take a look at bisexual families. How do we define our families? How have we created and maintained them? What issues do we face? I did not want to focus solely on families with children because this is not the only way to define a family. As Felicia Park-Rogers says in "Queering the Family," "To quote a brilliant eight-year-old, 'a family is one or more people who love each other.'"

In the following articles, you will find life experiences, advice for how to protect your family and a look at how we fit into a major social/cultural shift in family structure. BobBI Keppel, age 66, has watched this transformation happen. She shares from her personal as well as professional experience as a social worker in "Families and Change."

Juba Kalamka also offers slices of his experience. In "We Are Family?" he looks at the intersections of black family and identity, sexual orientation, and community expectations in his life.

Felicia Park-Rogers' own unique family was profiled in a local San Francisco television show about the Castro. Now, as executive director of COLAGE, Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere, she hears from BGLT families across the country. The speech reprinted here, "Queering the Family," continues her outspoken support for BGLT families.

Whatever your opinion is about same-sex marriage, most of us agree that all families need protections. Attorney Liz Schwartz provides information about how to create legal safeguards for unconventional families in "Legal Protections for the Alternative Family." Marshall Miller and Dorian Solot discuss the significance of this issue for bisexuals and their organization, The Alternatives to Marriage Project, in "White Picket Fence-Sitting: Bisexuality and Family Diversity."

I encourage all of you to share your stories. The world needs to know we are responsible to those we love; not nymphomaniacs who swing right out of our commitments as it believes us to be. As well, each of us needs role models and community so we can protect and honor our particular family.

Valerie Tobin is ATM's guest editor for issue #20.

LETTERS: CYBER, SNAIL, AND PSYCHIC

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Rob Lightner's bio on page 31 of issue #19 contained a reference to a Johnny Cash song, Folsom Prison Blues: "He shot a man in Reno just to watch him die". This was intended as humor, and we found it amusing; however, some of our readers missed the reference. Thus, we would like to clarify that Rob Lightner has never actually shot a man anywhere, for any reason, and that ATM does not endorse murder, killing, Reno, or even Johnny Cash.

ATM NEEDS BOUNDARIES

Greetings. I have been reading your magazine lately. Finding bi-friendly media is difficult at best. Your magazine leans heavily toward the kinky and ultra-sensational aspects of the bi experience, but you sometimes present insights that are worth wading through the waist-high hype for. However, in your most recent issue you have a bio credit on page 31 that is not just sensational, it is an offense, to say the least. You calmly state: "Rob Lightner is a freelance writer living in San Francisco. He has been a scientist, a librarian, and a sex educator. He shot a man in Reno just to watch him die."

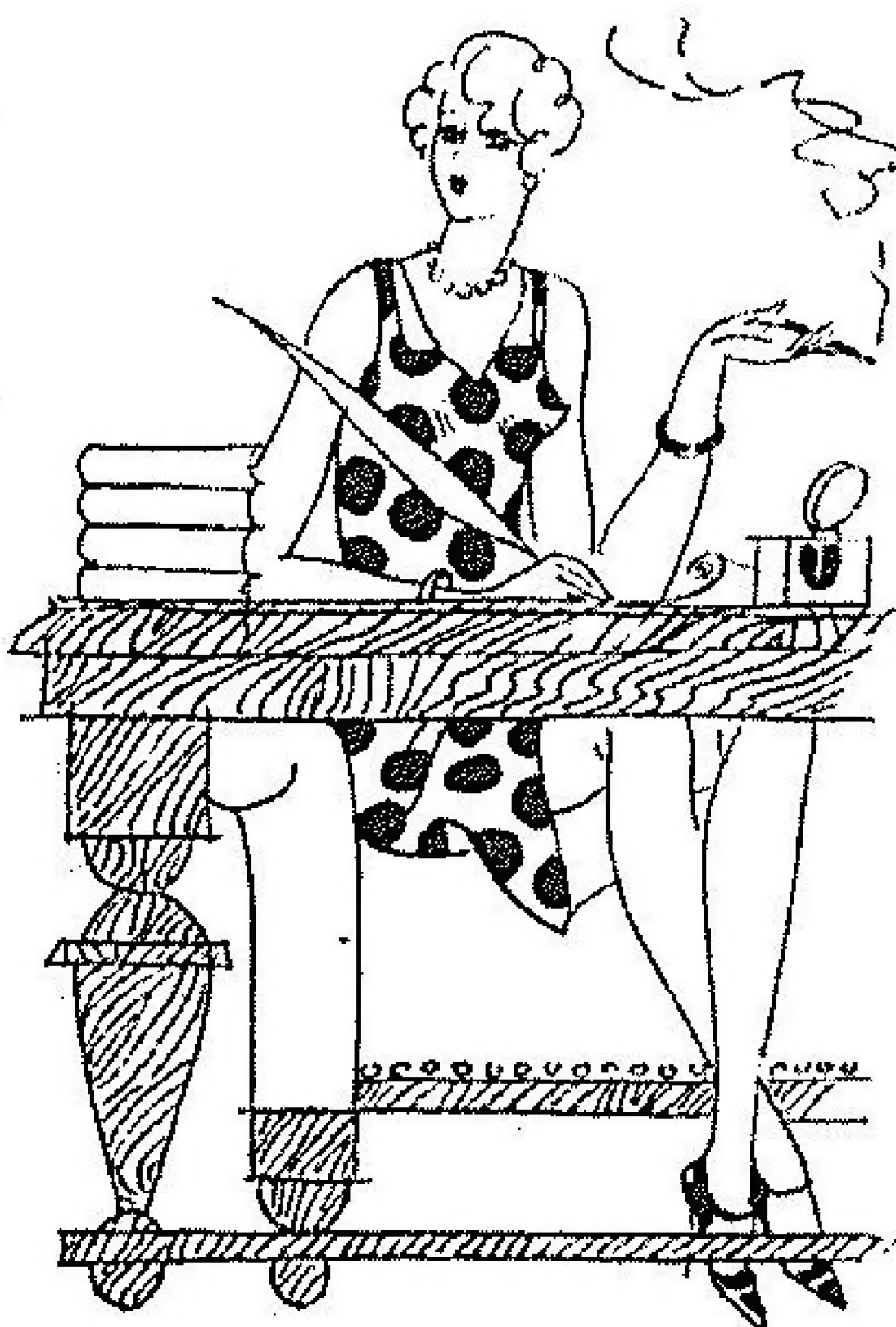
So, in your view, is murder now chic, or are you too wimpy to draw boundaries of any kind? You do state that you "will write or print or say 'Anything That Moves' us beyond the limiting stereotypes that are displaced onto us." Do you consider refusal to tolerate murder and a reverence for life "limiting stereotypes"? If so, I can only conclude you and your staff are as sociopathic as your touted writer. If you cannot draw boundaries where common sense dictates, you have no business being in the media where you can influence all and sundry.

I wonder if you would find this man's behavior as chic or acceptable if it were your friend, family member, or lover he murdered "just to watch them die?" Someone lost their family member, friend, lover because of this psychopath. Perhaps you are so distanced from your own emotions and the emotions of others that you would enjoy watching such a scene and never miss the dead guy, who knows. I do know I will spend no more of my hard-earned bucks supporting this kind of brutal sensationalism. You have just lost bucks, and I assure you I will do what-

ever I can to talk anyone I know out of supporting you with their bucks too, including Borders, the bookstore where this sad excuse for journalism was purchased.

May you wake up soon.

Teresa Hawkes
Editor, *The Oracular Tree*
<http://www.oraculartree.com>



MURDER IS NOT CONSENSUAL

I like your magazine. You cover some things that push my boundaries, but that's fine as long as you're talking about activities that are safe and consensual.

So what on earth is your quote about Rob Lightner in issue #19 about? "He shot a man in Reno just to watch him die."

Sorry, that's stepping way over the line into the unacceptable, especially since I'm staring at it a few days after the massacre at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado.

Spring Cascade
Boulder, CO
via cyberspace

WHERE ARE THE FTMs?

After you told me to check out your latest issue, I was excited to see an article on trans youth. After glancing at the photos, I felt something lacking in your coverage. I noted that there were only photos of female-identified youth.

Okay, I thought to myself, read the article... but still I found nothing on FTMs. There is not a single FTM or male-identified person. Does trans youth equal MTF only? Absolutely not! We here at FTM International are a resource just around the corner from your office!

I'm not trying to take away from our MTF sisters, whose visibility is just as important. I simply want visibility for FTMs as well. We are in many ways a very different group with separate issues. The same day we saw this article at the office of FTM International, we received a media advisory about a 15-year-old "girl" who identified and presented as a boy — and who committed suicide due to constant harassment and ridicule at school. I wonder if this kid and many others knew about male-identified people out there with similar feelings and experiences. This may have offered some hope.

Too many people equate transsexualism with femaleness. Transsexual does not equal MTF!

Thanks for the work you do. In the future, I ask you to please include FTMs and male-identified transpeople when you write articles intending to cover trans issues.

Dion Manley
Berkeley, CA

LONELY IN HOUSTON

Love your magazine — our magazine. For years, I tried to get a handle on my culture. We "inner loopers" in Houston are an endangered species. I wish I could find journalism work in San Francisco. You guys are so cool.

See "Letters" (p.4)

Letters (from p.3)

Life in Houston is oppressive. There are about six bisexuals or boring alcoholic crossdressers at meetings — no good clubs, coffee bars, or activities for “the rest of us.” If you don’t fit as stereotypical straight, gay, or lesbian, there’s not much. We “girly boys” are essentially loners or in the closet.

I especially loved #18 and especially kudos to Ganapati Shivananda Durgadas. His story seems so much like my own, I should like to meet such a person — a tantric androgyne.

Keep up the good work, gang!

Vicky
Houston, TX

BI FLAG?

A few months back, I received my copy of *The BiNet News* (Winter 1998). I always enjoy getting this publication, as it keeps me in touch with some of the things happening in the bi community. On page 6 of this issue is an article by Fritz Klein entitled “The Importance of Bisexual Symbols.” As I read it, I remembered some of the thoughts I had when I began my coming out process about four years ago. One of the most difficult parts about being bi, then and now, was that there didn’t seem to be anyone else who felt the same.

The invisibility factor was very strong. I never knew if there were any bi people out there because there didn’t seem to be anything, any symbol, which was truly ours. Yes, I have a

rainbow sticker on my car, but that didn’t describe “me.” I’ve often felt that the pride flag was the most noticeable symbol in the gay and lesbian movement — it was well accepted, and well-known. Why didn’t bisexuals have their own flag?

Now, I find, we do...

In his article, Fritz describes the flag as having “three horizontal stripes: magenta, turquoise and royal blue.”

He goes on to say that this item, as well as stickers, mugs, t-shirts, and so forth, are available for sale the BiCafe, at www.bicafe.com/BiMart. I was interested, took a look at what was there, and ordered a flag, two fridge magnets, and eight stickers. I have the stickers on my car, my motorcycle helmet, and all my guitar cases. I feel now, when I’m out... *I’m out!*

I’m hoping more people will identify with this flag. I think it’s very important to be seen, to be recognized not just as queer, but as our own very special kind of queer. In the next few months, I hope to see other cars with BiPride flag stickers on them. I hope to go down to my favorite coffee shop and see other people with BiPride lapel pins on their shirts.

One constant agony of being bi is that we’re invisible. This doesn’t have to be the case any longer. Please join me in showing our true colors.

Thanks very much.

Bruce Antink
Palo Alto, CA

Send your thoughts, criticisms, praise, questions, xeroxed body parts, whatever, to: Letters to the Editor, Anything That Moves, 2261 Market St. #496, San Francisco, California 94114-1600 USA, or email: letters@anythingthatomoves.com. Letters may be edited for length. Unless you tell us not to, we will print your name. Aliases or anonymous letters are, of course, respected, but please send us your real name, and we won’t tell anybody you wrote us if you don’t want us to.

TRINA ROBBINS

WRITER, ILLUSTRATOR,
LECTURER, HERSTORIAN,
SUPERHEROINE



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ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST: TRINA ROBBINS

Trina Robbins has been writing and drawing comics for more than 30 years. In 1970 she produced the very first ever all-woman comic book, It Ain't Me, Babe. Her latest book is From Girls to Grrrlz, a history of girls' comics, from teens to zines. She lives in San Francisco and doesn't have enough cats.

Knight Moves:

Forget Marriage! How About a Defense of Bisexuals Act?

by Adam Wills



Since New Year's Eve 1999, the collective consciousness of our nation has been focused on how we are going to celebrate the day we enter the 21st century. Months before Christmas merchandise arrives, party stores are already rolling out the decorations for New Year's 2000. As the fateful day draws ever closer, it'll be difficult to get the public to care about much of anything else.

But after the champagne bottles are fished out of the swimming pools and hot tubs, Californians will return to their normal routines, most of them unaware of what the future holds. A slim two months after January 2000, the voters of California will go to the polls to decide if marriage should be defined solely as a union between one man and one woman.

Unless Californians for Fairness' "No on Knight" campaign can get enough people to gather volunteer support and raise enough money to fight the California Defense of Marriage Act (CDOMA), Golden State queers may wake up on March 8, 2000 to find that same-sex marriage will never have a chance at becoming legal.

It wouldn't exactly be the best way to start off a new century.

DOMA call us, we'll call you

In 1996, President Clinton signed a national version of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) into law. Legislators had introduced DOMA fearing that a Hawai'i lawsuit would open the door to legalization of same-sex marriage. If the Hawai'i Supreme Court had ruled that a ban on same-sex marriage was in violation of the state constitution prior to

passage of DOMA, other states would have been required to recognize a same sex marriage performed in Hawai'i as legal.

Under the "full faith and credit" clause of the Constitution, each state must recognize the public laws, records, and judicial proceedings of every other state. But the Defense of Marriage Act handed the states a "Get Out Of Jail Free" card by allowing each state to decide whether to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states.

Religious groups and conservative legislators immediately took up the crusade to pass anti-gay marriage legislation at the state level to prevent future legalization of same-sex, polygamous, or polyamorous marriages. So far 30 states have passed such legislation.

In California, State Senator William "Pete" Knight (R-Palmdale) has made three unsuccessful bids to push different versions of the Defense of Marriage Act through the California Assembly and the Senate. By Nov. 17, 1998, Knight managed to gather enough signatures to get his legislation on the statewide ballot. If passed, Statute Initiative 819 would change the California Civil Code to read "only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California."

The grassroots aren't always greener

Private polling has shown that after reading the arguments for and against Knight's initiative, California voters split on the issue at an even 48% each way. With such a strong showing at such an early stage in the campaign, "No on Knight"

See "Knight Moves" (p.6)

Knight Moves (from p.5)

is hoping that they'll be able to build on that support with the help of contributions and volunteers.

"No on Knight" is anticipating that they will need to raise \$5 million to fight their campaign. The funds will go to support television and radio ads, and to organize volunteers at the grassroots level to distribute campaign information throughout California.

1998's failed attempt to reintroduce ENDA was best summed up by Washington for Traditional Values, which referred to the proposed bill as "job advocacy for bisexuals."

While it might sound high, \$5 million to fight an anti-gay campaign is a remarkably low figure. In 1998, Basic Rights Oregon was expecting that it would have to raise at least \$2.5 million to fight a statewide anti-gay ballot initiative proposed by the Oregon Citizens Alliance, the same organization that sponsored Measure 9. Oregon has roughly one tenth the population of California.

In what some call "Astroturf organizing," Sacramento-based political consultants Cavalier and Associates are handling some aspects of Knight's campaign. Knight's signature gathering to get the petition on the ballot was largely handled by Arno Political Consultants and Nevada-based National Voter Outreach, and a majority of the campaign funding has come from religious broadcasting and conservative corporate sources.

The worst strategy "bi" far

In the campaigns to pass DOMA and defeat proposed protections for the sexual minority communities, bisexuals have become a favorite target of anti-gay groups and conservative commentators. The bisexual movement has achieved a dubious visibility in the press in recent years as the community deemed most likely to join the Mormons in calling for the repeal of bigamy laws following the legalization of same-sex marriage.

In 1995, one year before the national Defense of Marriage Act was introduced on Capitol Hill, bisexual stereotypes flew in the House of Representatives. California's own Republican Representative Bob "B-1" Dornan railed against the July 17th *Newsweek* cover story about bisexuality by throwing out a host of bisexual stereotypes such as "They all have multiple partners."

In the fervor to ensure passage of DOMA, conservative commentators followed in Dornan's footsteps and put legalization of same-sex marriage on a par with incest and bigamy.

On July 16, 1996, in a *Boston Globe* column about DOMA, Jeff Jacoby wrote, "Some men would prefer two or three wives. Others are attracted to their daughters, or their aunts, or the wife next door. Bisexuals might like a husband *and* a wife."

September 1996, *Chicago Tribune* Columnist Linda Bowles wrote, "What will we say to the bisexual who demands the right to marry the man and woman of his choice?"

While Congress argued the finer points of DOMA, they were also considering the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), a bill that would make job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation illegal. Numerous conservatives expressed strong reservations about supporting an employment protection bill that was inclusive of bisexuals. They felt that passage of ENDA would have constituted government endorsement of sexual promiscuity.

A stronger opinion came from Robert Knight of the Family Research Council, who said that ENDA "defines 'sexual orientation' so broadly that all sexual proclivities, from pedophilia to bisexuality, are given special protection."

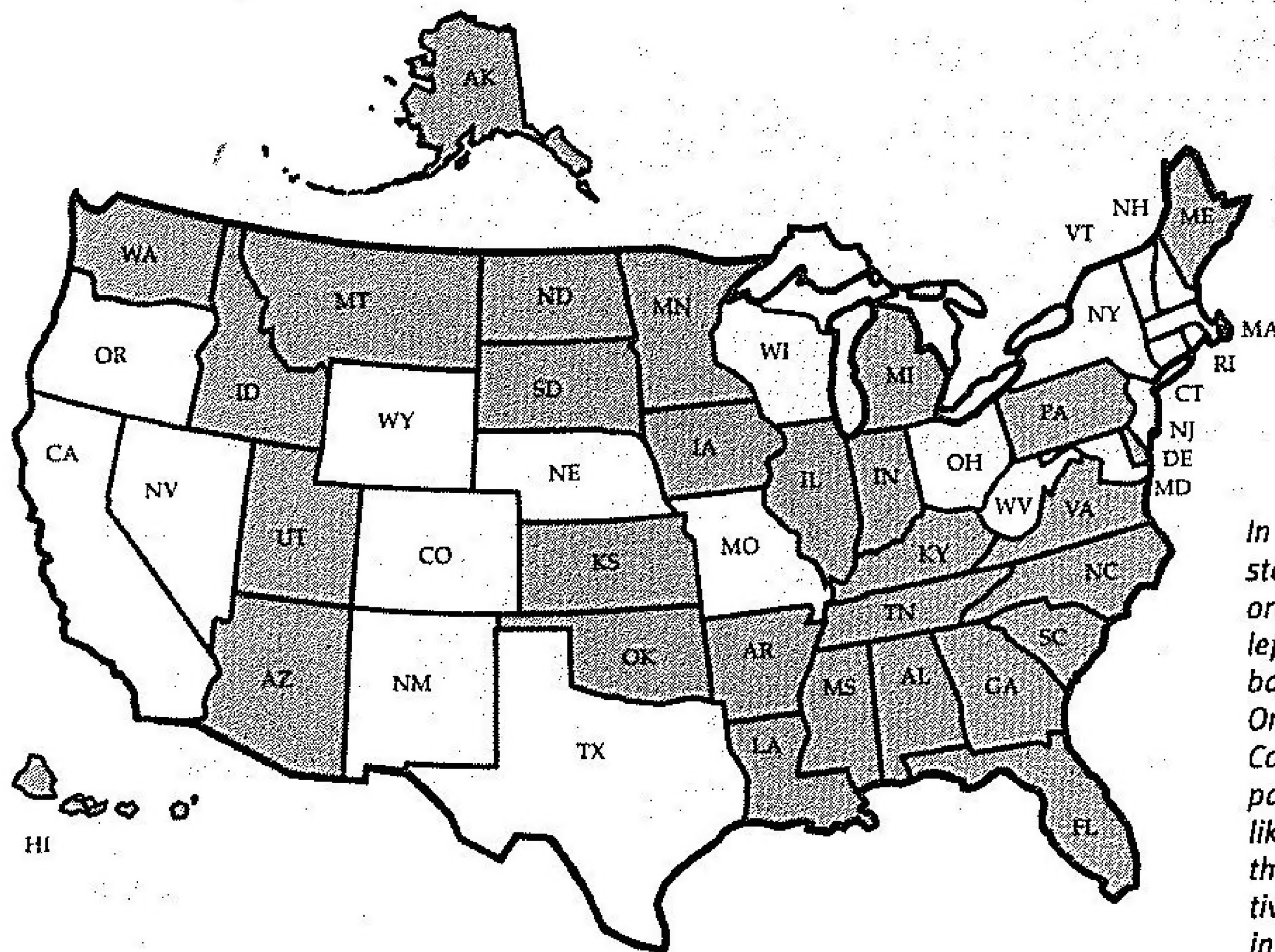
In an interesting turnaround, the nation's largest bisexual membership and advocacy organization, BiNet USA, recently voted *not* to support the new version of ENDA being reintroduced into Congress because the bill is not inclusive of transgender concerns. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has also withdrawn its support for the bill for the same reason.

Following DOMA's passage and ENDA's defeat, the stereotype of bisexuals as clandestine bigamists lurking in the shadows of the gay and lesbian movement proliferated among conservatives and the religious right-wing.

In 1997, conservative Jewish commentator Dennis Prager, whose interest in scapegoating bisexuals stretches back to at least 1993, railed against the ordaining of gay rabbis out of fear that it would open the floodgates to increased acceptance of bisexual bigamy.

1998's failed attempt to reintroduce ENDA was labelled by Washington for Traditional Values as "job advocacy for bisexuals."

That same year in a *Los Angeles Times* interview, California's own Sen. Knight was quick to establish a link between same-sex marriage and bigamy. "If we change the definition [of marriage], then we take the one man and one woman out of it. If three people get together and decide they want to get married, the courts are going to have a hard time denying that relationship."



In the United States, 30 states to date (the ones colored in on the map to the left) have passed legislation banning same-sex marriages. Only 20 states, including California, have not yet passed such legislation, but like California, many of those states will face legislative challenges on this issue in the coming year.

In the same way that bisexual stereotypes have aided in the passage of DOMA and the defeat of ENDA, there has been a growing trend among conservative and religious groups to include the word "bisexual" in anti-gay ballot initiatives at the state level to ensure stronger support from voters. To a society whose reigning relationship ideal is monogamy, the idea of affording legal protections to a group of people who "want to sleep with anything that moves" is morally reprehensible.

The tip of the iceberg

Despite the presence, and regular enforcement, of bigamy laws in the California Civil Code, Sen. Knight continues to tell voters that the laws aren't adequate enough to prevent someone, like a bisexual, from entering into a marriage with two people.

Given that this scare tactic has been so effective in the past, there's a chance it could succeed once again if the "No on Knight" campaign is unable to reach its goal of raising at least \$5 million and developing a large enough pool of volunteers.

For California bisexuals, the "No on Knight" campaign may grow to represent more than just opposition to a discriminatory ballot initiative. Also at stake could be how the gay, lesbian, and heterosexual communities regard bisexuals in the future.

Gone are the days when negative stereotypes about bisexuals only wreaked havoc with an individual's love life. As we enter

a new century, those same old stereotypes are influencing the passage or defeat of national and state legislation. Their use by Sen. Knight may have already done a fair amount of damage to the reputation of the California bi community. Whether that damage swells or shrinks in the future depends entirely on the level of intervention on the part of bisexuals coupled with the final outcome of the election.

Adam Wills is a writer/editor based out of Los Angeles. He is the founder and former president of the Portland Bisexual Alliance, and served as campaign manager for openly bisexual Oregon State Senator Kate Brown. In his spare time he runs BIachad - the international Web site/e-mail discussion list for Jewish bisexuals.

Want to Get Involved?

Funding and support for California's DOMA initiative is currently running at about four or five times the level for opposition to the bill.

For more information or to volunteer, call 415-227-1020 or visit their Web site: www.noonknight.org. If you don't have time to volunteer, you can mail your contributions to:

Californians for Fairness
(State ID#990089, Treasurer: Kirk Pessner)
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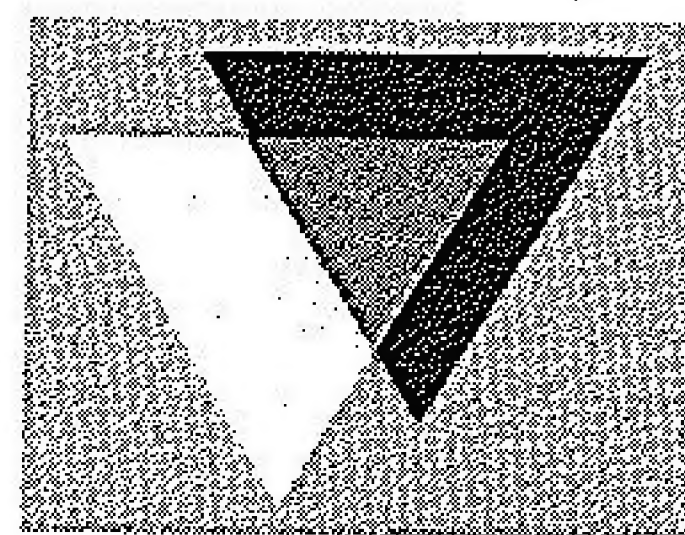
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BiNet USA

PO Box 7327

Langley Park, MD 20787

E-mail: BiNetUSA@aol.com



What is BiNet USA?

BiNet USA is the oldest and largest national Bisexual organization in the USA. Our mission is to collect and distribute information regarding Bisexuality; to facilitate the development of Bisexual community and visibility; to work for the equal rights of Bisexuals and all oppressed peoples; and to eradicate all forms of oppression inside and outside the Bisexual community. We are committed to being affirmatively inclusive of a multicultural constituency and political agenda. Becoming a member of BiNet USA is an opportunity to join with others who share your vision of a Bi-friendly world, and who recognize the value and power of a vibrant national political action organization of Bisexuals and Bi-friendly supporters. We have a great future ahead of us, and we look forward to welcoming you to our ranks.

Yes, I want to join BiNet USA!

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Email Address: _____

Phone: _____ Is discretion necessary? Yes ___ No ___

BiNet USA asks that each member donate \$1 per \$1,000 of annual income. For those who are able, we ask that you consider donating between \$1 and \$10 per \$1,000 income (between 0.1% and 1%). No one is denied membership due to lack of funds. Dues can be waived for those unable to pay.

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ANYTHING THAT MOVES

Queering the Family

by Felicia Park-Rogers

Photos provided by author



FELICIA AND HER MOM AT THE BEACH.

This is dedicated to a 16-year-old boy in Nebraska who one day in the locker room after gym class was held down and beaten up. His assailants called him a cocksucker and attempted to force him to give them blow jobs, claiming he did it with his father. All this, because his dad is gay. It is also dedicated to Joan Nestle and her words and spirit. It is partly inspired by her essay, "My Mother Liked to Fuck."

I wouldn't be here in front of you today if it wasn't for my parents. I want to thank them for falling in love, even though eventually they both came out, and for camping that special week on the beach in Baja, CA nine months before I was born. My parents have taught me so much about love and about heartache. They've taught me that nonconformity can stand side by side with community-building, and that principles and justice can be more important than loyalty.

The other part of my family I'd like to thank is the love of my life, Rachel Timoner. I want to thank her for never letting me forget that I am free and for pushing me — often farther than I want to go — for helping me see my greatest potential self and nurturing that person into being. I couldn't ask for a more gentle, loving, brilliant butch.

I was born in 1971 in San Francisco to counterculture, non-monogamous, radical parents who gave me the middle name Angela in honor of Angela Davis. When I was three, my mom came out as bisexual, my dad gay, and they split up. After having two more children with a male partner, my mom came out as a lesbian when I was 13. My dad is a housing and disability rights advocate and activist. My mom is a poet, a writer of lesbian erotica, an organic gardener, and an activist on issues like breaking the blockade to Cuba. When I was 19, I came out as bisexual. That same year, my dad told me he has AIDS and has been HIV+ since 1984.

I work for COLAGE: Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere, a national and international organization based in San Francisco. COLAGE was started in 1990 by a group of young people with lesbian and gay parents at a Family Pride Coalition

conference in Washington, D.C. Our national and international mailing list has grown to more than 4,000; we have 25 chapters, numerous support programs, and do local, regional, and national education and advocacy campaigns about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender families and BGLT rights.

I'm here to speak on behalf of the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of kids with queer parents. We are a diverse group, so I cannot do us all justice. The more you include this part of the queer community, the kids of BGLT parents, the more you will have an opportunity to see for yourself what a diverse crew we are and to learn about our complex and diverse viewpoints.

First, let me get a couple of the basics on the table so we can move on. There are three primary misconceptions about kids with queer parents: one, our parents sexually abuse us; two, our parents make us queer; and three, because our parents are queer we are socially stigmatized to such a degree that we cannot function normally in society. I can't tell you how many times I've been asked if my mom's lesbian friends tried to have sex with me, if my dad had sex in front of me, and if I'm queer because of my parents.

Kids of queer parents are proof none of these things are true. Sexual abuse doesn't happen at any higher rates. Queer parents don't make, force, or recruit their children to be queer. Yes, all children of queer parents deal with a lot of homophobia. And no, that doesn't turn us into asocial, pathological axe-murderers.

See "Queering the Family" (p.10)

"Queering the Family" (from p.9)

So we're here to talk about family. That's a pretty loaded word. It's right up there with black, white, rich, poor, queer, straight. We all have complex, multidimensional relationships to the word and concept. We all have multiple families: our families of friends, families of colleagues, families of birth, families by adoption. Some of us have families that include children. Some do not. As queers, many of us have gone to a lot of trouble to redefine what family means; it's taken a lot of therapy and a lot of hard work. So for some of us the last thing we want to do is spend our time or money talking about gay marriage, gay family values and how gay families are just like everybody else's except with two moms or two dads.

I'm here today to tell you that talking about family isn't talking about assimilation.

The queer movement has offered three major gifts to this country. The first is sexual liberation (thank God). The second is gender liberation (thank Leslie Feinberg, Kate Bornstein, feminism, and more). The third is one we didn't even realize we were offering — but the Right did, and they've been attacking us up and down and all over on it. In fact, they've been kicking our collective ass because we couldn't figure it out.

The third gift we have to give America is family liberation. Hell, our community anthem is, after all, "We are Family". Family is one of the fundamental organizational structures of society and we are queering that structure every day of our lives. It's time for us to recognize that and be proactive and vocal about it. Just like with sex and gender, it is time for us to blow it wide open.

We have been looking at queer family issues all wrong. First of all, queer families are not just about kids, though that is the perspective and experience I am here to represent. To quote a brilliant eight-year-old, a family is one or more people who love each other.

Hear me now. I know as soon as I say the word family most of you shut down, tune out, lose interest. I need you to stop and listen. A family is one or more people who love each other — whether it's your housemates, your cat, your 98-year-old aunt, or your leather group. Family is the people you call in the middle of the night and they listen. We all need that, crave that, and instinctually gravitate toward building that. It is the basic, fundamental, animal way we organize ourselves and connect with one another. It is not always forever — your cat dies, your housemates get evicted, your leather group goes vanilla, things change. But we always find a new home and build a new family.

Queers as a group have been persecuted for generations and in response we have developed a culture of care-taking, of

loving and nurturing one another. We get into family feuds, we have great family holidays, we create families by choice rather than happenstance. And for that we are now being attacked by the Right. They want to maintain their patriarchal, white supremacist, insular model of families.

Don't let the Right take our history and our culture and the word family from us. We need it, deserve it, it is ours. Don't let them inundate us with their cynical, fascist propaganda. It will kill our individual and collective souls. We need each other — we need family — too much.

We have queered the concept of family and we need to keep right on doing it.

In looking at families, I think most of us tend to see two roads. The first is the assimilation road which looks like this: gay families are just like every other family and we just want equal rights and to be left alone. The second road is the avoidance of the family issue, because of the fear of assimilation and the stereotyping of BGLT families with kids as assimilationists who just want to be breeders. If we stay locked on these two roads, then as a movement we will continue to get creamed by the Family Research Council, Focus on the Family, Coral Ridge Ministries and all the rest.

We have to remember that in talking about families we are not just reacting to the Right. They took everything they know and everything they're based on from the left and the queers. That begins with grassroots organizing and extends through discussion of family. They are reacting to our redefinitions of family and trying to suck us back to the land of Ozzie and Harriet. We are simply refusing to let them derail our formidable momentum.

To repeat: Family liberation is the third major gift we have to offer after sexual and gender liberation. A third option exists within the assimilate/anti-family divide: Queering the family.

Queer families are different from the pervasive, pernicious image of family that has been forced down our throats. We are not the first nor will we be the last community to come under attack about our particular brand of family values. Single mothers, parents on welfare, young mothers, large extended families, poor families, homeless families (and we are part of all these groups as much as they are part of us) have all come under severe attack and been used along with us as scapegoats and wedge issues.

The gift that kids of queer parents have to give is that we don't see our families as normal. We recognize that our families are different. The communities we grow up in are different. For the most part our community has different values (remember the sex and gender liberation part?). Kids growing up in BGLT families are different, not necessarily better, but different, and we are damn proud of that. We are often more

open-minded, more compassionate and understanding about dealing with difference and discrimination. We have more gender freedom. We often have more freedom from sexual shame and repression. And regardless of our ultimate sexual orientation we're pretty damn queer.

So let's claim it, celebrate it, relish it. Let's brag about our families, our loved ones: our kids, friends, and lovers. And let us join in alliance with all of the stigmatized families, with families on welfare, with single parents, with immigrants, with all families under attack for being themselves.

I know not everybody here has kids or will have kids. I know most everybody here doesn't have one or more queer parents. But I want you to imagine something for me. I want you to understand the level of connection between you and the hundreds of thousands, possibly even millions of kids growing up in this community. You see, I take the word "family" very seriously. I never related to it as a child. I had a pre-conceived notion of it as an Ozzie-and-Harriet type thing, and my family certainly wasn't — isn't — that. The gift that the BGLT family movement has given me is giving me back that word and helping me see that not only is my rag-tag bunch of queer relatives and friends my family, this whole community is.



BACK ROW RACHEL, FELICIA, WALT (DAD)
FRONT ROW: BRIAN (MY SISTER'S BOYFRIEND),
ELIZA (MY SISTER), LILITH. AT THE COLAGE RIVER
RAFTING TRIP IN 1998

You, you in this room, are all I have ever known. Ever. And there are hundreds of thousands more where I come from. Take a minute to imagine the subversive power of that. Take a minute to imagine the joy and the pain of those children. Imagine being a child wearing a shirt that says, "I love my two mommies." Imagine growing up in a house where the books are by Audre Lorde, Paul Monette, James Baldwin, and Susie Bright. Imagine being a child at a conference like this. Imagine being a child accidentally finding your dad's men's porn mags under the bed. Imagine knowing what the word bisexual means before knowing that some people think fag is a bad word. Imagine what it's like the first time you learn that people hate your parents just because they are lesbian. Imagine not having any more contact with your grandparents because your mom or dad came out and they don't like it. Imagine dealing directly with homophobia before you can even talk. Imagine.

For many kids in queer families, this is it. This is home. It doesn't matter if we grow up to be straight or queer. Queer is what we know. We get beat up for it. We get called fag and dyke and cocksucker for it. We leave homophobic schools because of it. We lose a parent or extended family because of it. We have a hard time dating because other people don't get

it. We get made fun of by our teachers for it. But it doesn't matter. We know the homophobia is wrong, not the homosexuality, bisexuality, transsexuality and transgender identities.

We don't always deal with being different and discriminated against well. Sometimes we lash out at our parent or parents or their partners or friends. Sometimes we hide in the closet for awhile. Sometimes we listen to Rush Limbaugh for awhile. Sometimes we hurt ourselves by drinking too much, slutting around too much, physically harming ourselves. Sometimes we allow ourselves to stay isolated or depressed too long. But you know what? If we're lucky enough to be

connected to this broader family we can come out of the hard times and celebrate our difference with gusto and glee.

With the help of our family — you — we can recognize that being different is a gift that provides insight and compassion and recognition of the need to participate in movements for justice. When COLAGE kids have beach campfires, we don't sing "Ninety-Nine Bottles of Beer on the Wall"; we sing liberation songs and show tunes. When teachers tell us we don't act manly enough, we tell them they can take that issue up with our butch mama. And when our young lovers hide in the dark we loan them our dads' copy of *The Joy of Gay Sex*.

Yes we're different. A different kind of family. A fabulous kind of family and we don't have to assimilate in order to demand, deserve, and receive equal rights.

So I want to know what you're gonna do.

Every day of my life I work toward a radical re-visioning of the concept of the American family. I do this by telling my story. By fighting assimilation. By defying the racist, sexist definitions of family. By loving my partner with dignity and pride. By supporting kids with BGLT parents. By supporting queer youth looking for a literal and a figurative home. By helping my city build a queer community center.

What do you do? Whatever it is, keep doing it, and keep finding new ways to proclaim loud and clear that your family, however you define it, is out, loud, proud, and here to stay.

If you do that, you will be changing one of the most fundamental structures of society, and you will be participating in one of the most monumental cultural shifts of our era: Queering the family.

Felicia Park-Rogers is executive director of COLAGE: Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere.

Swimming Upstream:

Queer Families and Change

by BobBI Keppel

photos provided by author with special thanks
to Sheila Johnson at Walnut Hill Graphics

Most families will find something applicable in much of this article. However, some is specific only to bisexual and/or polyamorous people. For further information, check out In The Family, the journal for therapists working with queer families.

When I was growing up, it was simple. A family was two people, presumed to be a woman and a man, married (at least publicly), monogamous, and probably parents. Most of their extended family were biologically related or coupled with biological relatives. Most people moved infrequently, if at all, and relationships might continue in the same community throughout an entire lifetime. That was what most people thought of when they said "family."

When I got married in 1957, it never occurred to us to even talk about monogamy, other partners, or same-sex relationships. There was some "diversity" in my family: Unlike most other families of that time, my parents divorced; both remarried. In addition to the biological family, my dad and stepmom had a blended extended family of non-biologically related friends — folks they knew from childhood, or met through the labor movement and radical politics. My stepmom's close friendships from childhood endured. She and her women friends continued to visit each other every year, often for several weeks, with and without dad.

In my own lifetime, the reality of families, and of my family, have changed drastically. My own family has been me with my husband and, later, with our two children. It has been me with spouse and kids and an extended non-biological family of close friends of several generations. At one time, it was also me with my children, a non-"live-in" woman partner, and a tight bunch of friends. Right now it is me living alone, some very close friends, and my biological children. Some of the friends live in my neighborhood, some in the same city, some in the state but several hours drive away, some in the nearest large city, and some scattered across the United States. My children live 1,500 and 3,000 miles away, respectively — my family, but seldom seen. It might be a couple of months between calls with my son or daughter, but never even a week with my close friends in town. And, with email, some of us

chat almost daily, certainly weekly, although lack of privacy may limit the topics of email discussion.

In my lifetime, I have been married and monogamous, married and non-monogamous (with men), married and non-monogamous (with women), widowed, single and monogamous with women, single and non-monogamous with married bisexual women, single and non-monogamous with married bisexual men. Some of these relationships have felt like family; others have not.

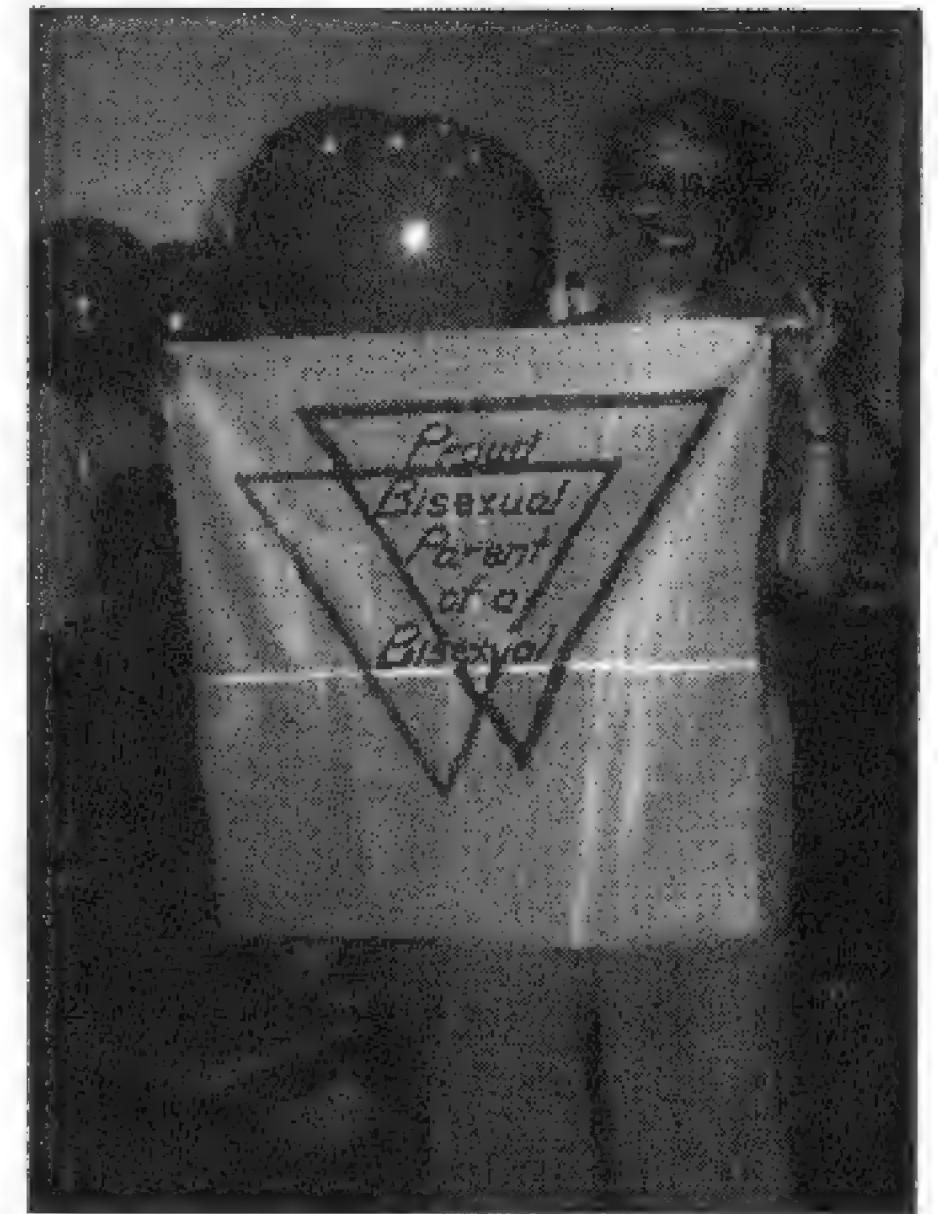
So, what is family? These days, it can be whatever you understand it to be for you. You can even design your own.

The one thing that is universal about families is change. This was true even when people didn't move around much. It's even more true today. Whether you push to be on the cutting edge, dig your heels in to prevent change, or just float along, your relationships will change and, hopefully, grow better.

For better or worse, in fact, the growth is built in anyway.

For folks who have children, growth is built in because those little ones make visible changes practically daily. Sometimes parents think they won't need to change much while their kids are growing, but they get pushed along anyhow. The changing demands of kids push and pull the family unit all the time.

Kids are not the only forces for change in relationships and families. Every relationship, every family gets pushed and pulled; it either grows or dies. If it doesn't grow, we know there is a problem with its health. Many people have friends who are much closer emotionally than biological family members. Most people move several times over their lifespans, as do their parents and their children and all of the other family members. More and more people are cut off from their families of origin by geography and/or emotions.



BOBBI AT BOSTON PRIDE ABOUT 1988,
HOLDING UP "PROUD BISEXUAL PARENT
OF A BISEXUAL" BANNER

Some people don't feel like they have a family. Many of us make up new families which may or may not overlap with the old.

There are healthy families and unhealthy families. In my experience, family health is not usually based on how people configure their families. It isn't inherently better to be in a biological family or a chosen family. It isn't inherently better to have children or not to have children. It isn't inherently better to have one partner or several.

In my experience, the farther folks are from the social norm, the more important it is for them to live the courage of their convictions. They need to establish that what they are doing is right for them and theirs. They need to discuss the difference in what they do and how and the reasons for it — frequently. If people are ashamed and/or secretive about what they are doing, shame will dominate the relationships and affect everyone in the family. Everyone, especially kids, will carry shame rather than the joy of doing what feels right and good. That doesn't mean telling everyone about everything we do differently, but it does mean cherishing what we have and sharing it with those who can be supportive. And when there are reasons to change what the family does or how it is configured, that's okay too, and needs to be explained and discussed frequently.

Our children tell me that they knew at very early ages that our family wasn't like most others. They also knew we were convinced it was the right kind of family for us, and why. We all thought of ours as an extended family; some of the "extensions" were sometimes sexual. Our kids say they didn't know or care about the sexual part, just the quality of the friendships various adults brought to our family. They loved having interesting adults around who were welcomed into the family and were available to talk with, make music with, learn with, and fall back on when parents were busy, sick, or otherwise unavailable.

Some of these folks lived in town and were regulars in family activities; others were traveling folk musicians who stayed with us a few days or weeks while on tour. Some of these folks were partnered; some were not. These folks and their relationships taught all of us that whether a relationship is good or bad does not depend on the number of players or whether or not they are married.

And how does being in a bi family affect the lives of our children now? Our older child is bi and poly, so she's close to

our family norm. She's out and proud. Our younger child is straight. When he's dating a woman at all seriously, he tells her his mom is bi. His words: "If she can't deal with that, I'm out of there." Does he tell her his sister is also bi? "No, if she can deal with my mom being bi, she can deal with my sister, but not vice versa." By the way, he also checks out racism, sexism, and so forth. Says he doesn't like bigots.

I believe it is supremely important to learn the skills of relationships and practice them every day. We all need to be open to learning new ways of doing things with others. We also need to work on being healthy as individuals: building our self-esteem and learning when and how to say "no" and "yes" and "maybe" and "not now." If we can't be okay with ourselves, we certainly won't be okay in relationships with others.

If I could give every person one tool for family and other relationships, it would be negotiation — both the skill and the awareness of its importance. No one can or should get everything s/he wants, but most of us can learn to negotiate so that everyone involved gets much of what they want. I truly believe that without negotiation, relationships may last but they will never be healthy.

We also need to deal more effectively with separations, especially where children are involved. Moving around, uniting, separating, configuring, and reconfiguring, all bring many partings. They need special attention. When friends leave town, we can do informal rituals with them to mark the separation. When relationships fracture, we can discuss an impending separation/divorce with those who are affected before, during, and after it happens. We can make times and spaces for rituals

which allow grieving, especially when children have formed close bonds with one or more adults from whom they are being separated. Sometimes, the grieving takes many years.

Here are some of my special concerns about bi families, here defined as a family with one or more bi members.

Oppression

Unfortunately, some or all members of a bi family will experience some kind of bi oppression on an almost continuous basis, and that experience of hostility will affect those bi people and all of those close to them. Most bi people's lives are full of "micro-aggressions" — small, frequent assaults on their integrity that come both from straight folks and from

See "Swimming Upstream" (p.14)

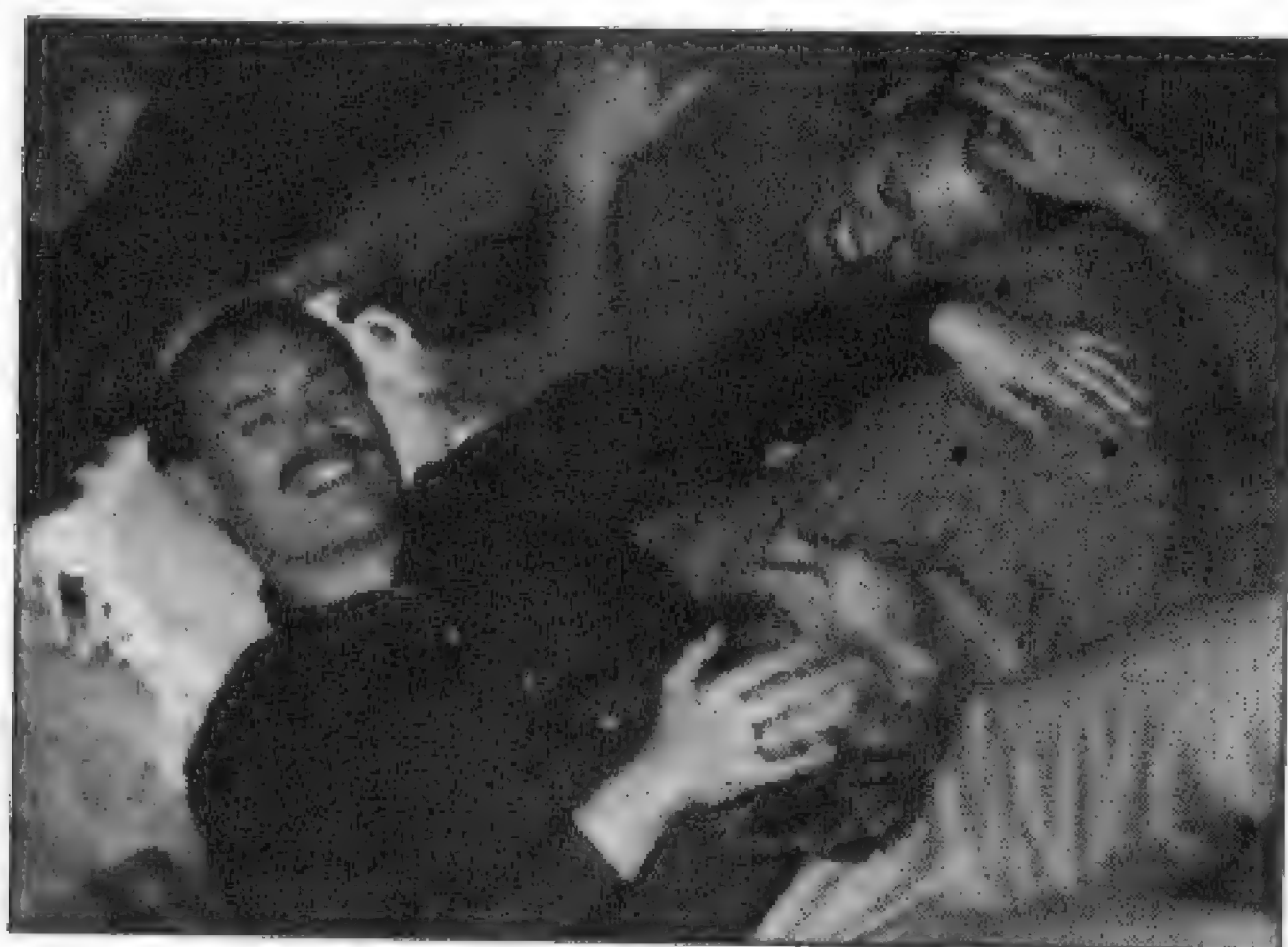


BOBBI, WILMA, AND DAVID KEPPEL IN NEW HAMPSHIRE AT OUR 1783 FAMILY HOME.

"Swimming Upstream" (from p.13)

lesbians and gay men. Some are attacks on bi individuals or bis as a group. Others are omissions as when all bis or you, as a bi, are left out as though bis don't exist. Either way, it's hard to feel free when these incidents are so frequent.

Developing and keeping your self-esteem through these assaults — or through the similar oppressions of racism, sexism, heterosexism, and other -isms takes constant attention, and can drain a family.



BOBBI AND 2 MEMBERS OF HER EXTENDED FAMILY MEETING IN OMAHA, NE. THE 3 OF US ARE FROM PORTLAND, ME; OMAHA, NE; AND SEATTLE, WA. AS YOU CAN SEE, WE KEEP IN TOUCH. ABOUT '94

A lot of energy is consumed in this swimming upstream. We swimmers need to take that into account when planning our lives. No relationship works well when the participants are exhausted. It works even less well when the participants are both oppressed and exhausted. Some of the time, we need to coast and rest. We need ways to refresh ourselves and support for doing it even when it inconveniences and/or disappoints others. Bi activists: read this paragraph twice a day. National bi leaders: read it three times a day.

Domestic Abuse

"Domestic violence" is partially a misnomer. Domestic abuse is always about power and control but not always about physical violence. It can be very confusing because the intimidation and control often alternate with kindness and loving. Often, domestic violence manifests as putting people down, isolating them, bossing them around, using economic abuse, threatening to leave, threatening to "out" them, and unprotected sex with one or more partners. I have known several people who died of HIV because their partners coerced them into unprotected sex.

We don't have many statistics about queer families yet, but we know domestic abuse is going on. Since families under the most stress are the most susceptible, bis must be included. We need to learn the warning signs of abuse, ways

to support people caught in either a victim or an abuser role, and how they/we can get help.

Safer Sex

Research shows that MSMW (men who have sex with men and women) who are not out and not in a bi-supportive community — one that affirms their identity and gives safer sex education — are likely to have unprotected sex with both women and men. Conversely, those who are out and supported are likely to have protected sex with all partners. Get that? Closets and denial = increased risky behavior. Out and supported = safer behavior. A supportive bi community is our best protection. No similar research exists about women yet, but their behaviors probably vary in similar ways.

On the other side of the coin, here are some strengths of bi families and some ways we can help them succeed:

Many bis, and most *ATM* readers, are looking for ways to have support, love, caring, and, maybe, commitment in ways that don't look like traditional families. Some create families with multiple adult partners, or one, or none. Some of these families have kids and some don't. Some of these families are successful in creating new forms; many are not.

Bisexuals bring some special strengths and attitudes to our families. Most of us have given up at least some of the "either/or" thinking of our society. We can imagine "both/and." We can live more easily with non-traditional ideas and forms of family. Just as our sexual identity and/or gender may be fluid, so too, ideas about families may flow and change more easily for us than for non-bis.

We can help and support each other in our explorations. This is not to say that we have to support what seems unhealthy to us, but it does mean being open to hearing about what's new and how it works before we make judgements. We can listen as our friends describe their hopes and experiences. They may figure out relationship forms which have never occurred to us and/or we didn't think could work — years ago, most of what I'm doing now wouldn't have occurred to me. We can confront domestic abuse and unsafe sex and support healthier behaviors. We can raise the level of caring and nurturing of bis and their significant others to counterbalance the biphobia and homophobia in our culture.

Although you may not know bis in your immediate area, the bi community extends around the world. Through *Anything That Moves* and other media, you can find a community of folks who will support your explorations and both support and challenge your thinking.

BobBI Keppel is a 66-year-old bi activist, social worker, former marriage and family therapist, white, middle class, widowed, artist, and mother of two adults.



and if hands could blush, mine would

*by Sandra Alland
photo by Amy Conger*

Irony of loves never
properly timed.
She held my hand
so tightly,
fingers pleading *Wait for me.*
Wait for *later on.*
So I worshipped the clock,
followed its hands
southward and steady,
thinking: *all boyfriends must pass.*

Kissing his mouth, salted
and saturated with tears,
heard my own voice saying:
 in another place (maybe)
 in another time
which, translated to English,
meant: *I'm waiting for someone,*
 so please wait for me. or:
 I'm selfish and uncertain.

Now I know she'll come
only after I'm gone,
and I'll return to find him
occupied (or deceased).

Irony of loves never
properly tuned.
Star-crossed somethings and
double-crossed loved ones and
straight girls who can't find
courage to touch palms
in the sun.
Deceit and thieving
are not in my nature,
yet I'm caught
red-handed
in the bedroom
again.

Sandra Alland is a Canadian/Scottish writer, activist and performer. Her poetry has most recently been published in Fireweed, Tessera, Prism International, and Canadian Women Studies.

In Remembrance of the Dead...

by Kathryn Page

photos provided by Gwen Smith

Whenver I find myself thinking about the murders, it comes down to just one thing: The stories have to be told.

Since August of last year, at least 10 transgender people have been murdered. If I start wondering why such things happen or what kind of persons would do it, I end up using the dreaded pronoun "they" — both referring to the transgender people who have died and to those who attack, torture, and kill them every day.

I don't want to produce more "theys," groups of "others" for everyone to mourn or condemn. I want to talk about individual human beings who matter to me, because in my world people don't deserve to die because of the way others perceive them.

I started investigating everything last February, when I overheard my friend Andrea saying that another transgender person had been murdered: "That makes a total of seven since last August." A small flurry of email about it had erupted among those who knew, but at the time, no one in the media even seemed interested in the pattern of violence toward transgender people that had steadily increased over the past six months. *Anything That Moves* had recently reaffirmed our

DRAG QUEEN MURDER

[Houston, TX: 022699] — Houston police this morning are investigating the death of a suspected male prostitute. The man was found shot to death overnight at a motel on Old Spanish Trail at Burgess in Southeast Houston. The man was wearing women's clothing when they found him. Witnesses say they last saw him talking to an unknown woman. It's not known who the woman was or why she may have shot him.

KPRC Channel 2 Houston

commitment to strengthening ties with the transgender community with a feature focus in issue #18. I felt that we needed to follow through on that commitment by giving the same attention to this story as we did to the Matthew Shepard murder.

Ironically, that commitment had recently come into question as a result of a story we published in issue #18, "I Just Do This to Impress Gay Men." When I decided to cover the murders, I ran to

my friend Max, who is FTM, in a panic over my ignorance of the issues surrounding transgender people's lives. I can ask Max any question, no matter how personal or ignorant it may sound, without fear of ridicule or defensiveness. As usual, he was very generous, not only recommending books and other resources, but also talking frankly and openly about his own life. And then he brought up the article we'd published. It was primarily about bisexual issues, but also contained some language which, even during copyediting, had made some of us cringe: words like "mutilate" in reference to FTM operations.

Max talked about the article without rancor and then showed me a west coast 'zine that had published an essay criticizing us about the same article. The 'zine was written by someone who is also FTM, and it was full of intense anger. The writer ranted and raved, but he had a point. People were getting killed, and yet those of us who noticed the language before the article went to press had said nothing about it.

After everyone on staff had read the 'zine's comments, we discussed the issue energetically. Those of us who had caught the references acknowledged that we had been more worried about censoring the author's thoughts than about whether we should

YET ANOTHER TRANS-MURDER IN TEXAS

[Houston, TX: 030399] — Police report that an unknown white male wearing women's clothing was shot several times in the parking lot of a Motel 5 in Houston on 24 Feb 99. The victim was taken by ambulance to a local hospital where he died.

Police say the only clue they have is the sighting of the victim seen talking to a young woman shortly before the shooting. Police do not know the identity of the victim, nor do they have a motive, suspect, or murder weapon.

This is the 3rd murder of a cross-dressed person in Texas in two months. Steve Dwayne Garcia was shot to death in Houston on 6 Feb, and Donald Fuller/Lauryn Paige was killed, stabbed repeatedly, in Austin in early January.

(In Your Face)

See "Remembering the Dead" (p.18)

I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard



RITA HESTER

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard Rita Hester say
Because maybe then my neighbors would have helped me as I screamed for my life, as I called out for help from someone, anyone — as this man stabbed my life away.*

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard Rita Hester say*

Because maybe then the Boston media that reported my death would have focused more on the brutal way I died and on seeking justice for me, rather than on describing me as "a man who wore women's clothes."

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard Chanel Chandler say
Because maybe then my father would have cried for his child, instead of telling the Fresno newspaper that he had not talked to me in years because he didn't approve of my lifestyle. This was not a lifestyle — this was my life!*

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard Lynn Vines say
Because maybe then I would have been allowed to go into the neighborhood in which my cousin lived and which was to become my home without being beaten almost to death by a group who didn't want "no faggot drag queen bitches walking through our neighborhood."*

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard Tyra Hunter say
Because maybe then I would have received proper medical care after a car accident, rather than being called a freak and left to bleed to death by the paramedics.*



TYRA HUNTER

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard Tyra Hunter say
Because maybe then there would be no way that the paramedics and doctors could state that the derogatory remarks made about me "didn't matter" because I was unconscious.*

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard Chanel Pickett say
Because maybe then the man who killed me in a most horrible way would have been convicted of murder instead of assault.*

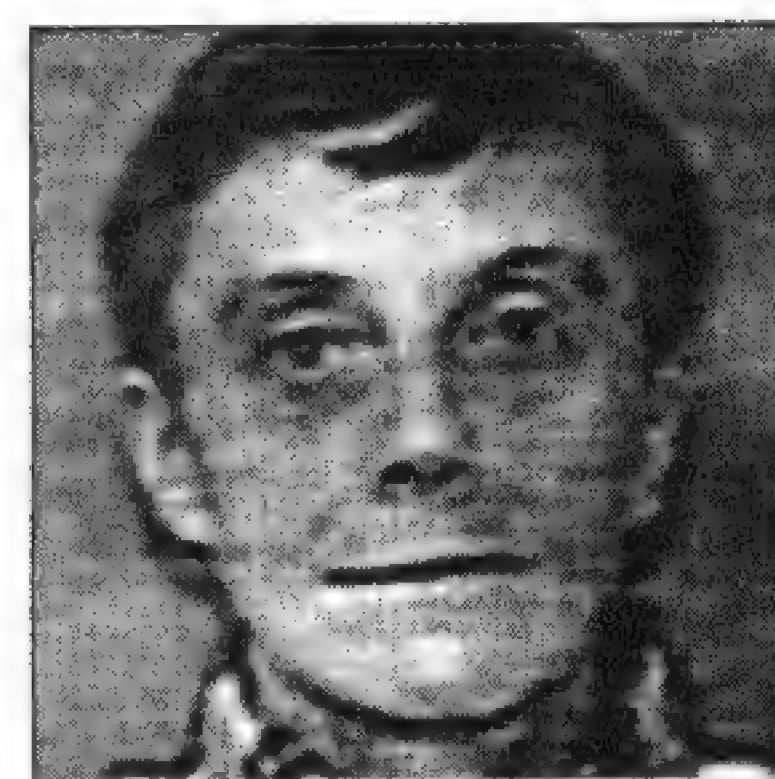
*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard all of them say
Because maybe then none of the people who robbed us of our lives or our dignity or sense of humanity would be able to use the bullshit "homosexual panic" defense to justify their evil.*

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard them all say
Because maybe then the world would have noticed us.*

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard Brandon Teena say
Because maybe then I would have been believed by law enforcement when I reported my rape, instead of being verbally raped by the sheriff.*

*I wish I looked like Matthew Shepard
I heard Brandon Teena say
Because then — oh wait —
I did look like Matthew Shepard — small, cute, appealing
And I was murdered, too.
Gee, I wonder why no one wanted to make me Time Magazine's "Man of the Year".*

*I wish I was still alive
I heard Matthew Shepard say*



EMMON BODFISH



LAURYN PAIGE

Yosefio V. Lewis is a black Latino female-to-male transsexual. A frequent panelist or speaker at national and international conferences, Yosefio hones his speaking skills by writing and performing poetry on issues which interest him most — which is just about everything! Yosefio's also an avid dancer and singer and one who freely gives away sacred hugs. When you see him be sure to ask for one!

"Remembering the Dead" (from p.16)

provide a forum for such beliefs, especially when they are only tangentially related to the article's main focus. We talked about the differences among "just being PC", preserving the author's content and view, and challenging words that unwittingly perpetuate an atmosphere of ignorance. As a result, our editorial guidelines now reaffirm that all editors are responsible for speaking up and opening a dialogue when something makes us uncomfortable — just as all of us are in real life.

After talking to Max and Andrea, I began researching the murders in depth. My research led me to trans organizer, activist, Web designer and writer Gwen Smith. She had organized a vigil for the murdered transmen and women, which was held outside the Castro Theatre while it was showing *The Brandon Teena Story*, the story of another transperson's murder. She had also put together the beautiful and moving Web site "Remembering Our Dead." (www.gender.org/remember).

"Remembering Our Dead" features pictures of the dead: rows and rows of human faces. I was struck by a feeling of personal loss — who knows what acts of heroism or simple kindness the world may have missed out on as a result of some stranger's act of fear?

CHANEL CHANDLER MURDERED IN CALIFORNIA

[Clovis, CA: 111798] — Transwoman Chanel Chandler, 22, was found murdered in her burning apartment on 20 Sep 98. Police think the blaze was set to disguise the murder.

Police have identified no suspects, nor have they determined a motive. As to her transgenderism being a motive, police spokesperson Micheline Golden said, "In a situation like this, that's the first motive you jump on, obviously, but you don't want to let that keep you from exploring other options. The impression we have is that she pretty much lived the life of a normal, single 22-year-old woman."

Chanel quit high school in Montana and moved to San Francisco to start a new life. She had just started a wholesale perfume business with her roommate. A friend said, "She was really excited. She said there's no limit to what she could do. I wouldn't be surprised if she was wealthy in 10 years. She had that energy and drive."

In Your Face

My response was to write this account of the most recent stories. I wanted more people to know what was happening, and that it was happening to people who were brave enough to claim the right to be who they are. I don't really know what I would find, if I had to look inside myself for that kind of bravery.

I got the majority of the information about the murders from Gwen and GenderPAC. Most accounts of the stories are outrageously disrespectful and attempt to titillate their readers by emphasizing the sensational aspects of the story. Often, even the queer media doesn't bother to refer to the victim using the person's chosen gender identity.

"Once you could do this to blacks and other minori-

ties, and women, and people with disabilities; but the standards of public discourse have evolved past that," said Riki Wilchins, executive director of GenderPAC, a transgender activist organization. "Now they're left with us to ridicule with impunity. Gender has become the new socially acceptable form of prejudice."

The first murder I heard about —

the one my friend Andrea was talking about — happened in Houston. Someone had shot a "suspected male prostitute" in a motel. When they

found "him," the papers said, "he" was wearing women's clothing. To me, it sounded like the transwoman had been murdered twice — first, her unknown assailant had killed her, and then the media obliterated her. They never even mentioned her name; the headline said, "Drag Queen Murder."

It was Feb. 26 at the time, and already eight transgender-perceived individuals had died, three of them in Texas. The other two at least had names: Steve Dwayne Garcia in Houston and Lauryn Paige in Austin. Papers described both as "appearing to be wearing women's clothing." Lauryn Paige's murder was especially grisly, and her murderers were described as "sadistic killers": "There was more than one wound, and they were very brutal in the application of those wounds," according to Commander Gary Olfers of the Austin police.

I tracked the string of murders back to last year, when the violence began to escalate.

August 1998: Four military policemen in the city of Salvador (Bahia, Brazil) force two transvestite sex workers to throw themselves into the sea after humiliating and torturing them. One of them, "Luana" (Junior da Silva Lago) drowns; her body is found three days later in an advanced state of decomposition.

The same month, Fitzroy "Jamaica" Green is murdered in Greenwich Village. The papers, especially the *New York Post*, have a field day sensationalizing the story. They describe her apartment as a "sleaze emporium," saying the fact that Jamaica was a member of a sexual minority was what killed

POLICE SEEK MURDERED TRANSVESTITE'S BOYFRIEND

[Abbeville, GA: 040399] — Before Billy Joe/Tracey Thompson died, he gave police a lead. "He was pretty much falling in and out of consciousness," said Sheriff Stacey Bloodsworth. "He said his boyfriend had beaten him."

The AP reports that Thompson (33) often hitchhiked up and down I-75 dressed as a woman. He was found Tuesday (30 Mar 99) badly beaten near a farmhouse 10 miles east of the Interstate near Cordele. He died later that day.

No arrest has been made. Local residents expressed little sympathy for Thompson. Said a retiree at a fast food restaurant, "They say he was wearing a dress. Most people in this area would say, 'Hell, he needed killing.'"

In Your Face

her. A barely disguised tone of ridicule and disdain characterizes their entire "report".

September: Chanel Chandler is murdered in her New York City apartment; her house is set on fire, probably to cover up what was done. [Ed. Note: Due to the New York District Attorney's lack of readiness to go to trial, the City has released Christopher Lopez and Christopher Chavez, Chanel's alleged murderers, and dropped all charges against them.]

Also in September, Monique Thomas is killed by a man who is later found in her car with her credit cards. When apprehended, he allegedly blames the murder on "some men" who had discovered that Monique was biologically male, as if that would explain everything.

November: Transwoman Rita Hester is murdered in her apartment. The Boston papers all report it as the death of a man and/or a transvestite. Once again, the killer tries to obliterate Rita with 25 stab wounds — a case of overkill typical in trans murders — but it takes the media to take Rita's life and make it a lie.

"She wanted it to be known that her name was Rita," the owner of a neighborhood bar comments. "She let everybody know what she was about." The media just doesn't get it.

Skip forward to April 1999: Georgia papers report Tracey Thompson's death as the "fourth U.S. murder of a transperson this year." I don't know who their sources are; obviously they don't include Gwen. Tracey was repeatedly bashed in the head with a baseball bat. Before she died, she told police her boyfriend had done it. She was going in and out of consciousness at the time. The news stories don't say what kind of loving care she got while the police interrogated her; they do say that they found out she was transgendered at the hospital.

BOSTON TRANSWOMAN KILLED

[Boston, MA: 113098] — Transgender woman Rita Hester was murdered in her Allston apartment on Saturday (28 Nov 98). She died of multiple stabs wounds.

The Boston Globe reports that a neighbor heard a commotion at about 6:15 p.m. Saturday, but ignored the noise. "I heard a lot of bangs," she said, "but I just thought someone was pounding on the door." Police have no leads except to say that the victim probably knew the killer. Other neighbors are nervous. Said one, "I don't know much. But I wouldn't want to say much if I did know. You never know what [the killer] might do."

The Globe reports the death of William Hester. "He was a nightclub singer and a party thrower, a man who sported long braids and preferred women's clothes..." *The Globe* editor responsible for the story decreed to his reporter that only male references would be made about the victim. Nowhere is acknowledgement made in their report that Hester was living as a woman.

(In Your Face)

FTM MURDERED

Reclusive FTM Emmon Bodfish was found by police in his Orinda, CA home on July 1st. Police are investigating the death as a potential homicide.

Mr. Bodfish's body was discovered by police, who had been asked by another individual to check the home. He was discovered on the floor in the main part of the house. Police reports point to blunt force trauma as the cause of death, though the murder weapon has not been determined. There were no signs of forcible entry, and while the house was in some disarray, the police were unsure if these were signs of struggle and/or ransacking, or just indicators of the upkeep of the house.

While the police have been reluctant to speak about the gender identity of the victim, neighbors have indicated that Bodfish had been living as a male and may have undergone some surgery. Initial reports on this case indicated that the coroner's office was having difficulty determining the gender of the victim, though this may have had more to do with the decomposition of the body — which had been sitting in the home for "about a week" — than any other reason.

NYC Am Boyz

I couldn't help but think about Tyra Hunter, who lay untreated on a stretcher for five to seven minutes while emergency medical personnel backed away and made derogatory remarks about her. Like Tracey, Tyra died later of her injuries. [Ed. Note: Tyra Hunter died in 1995. Last year, her mother won \$2.5 million in damages from the city government, who finally admitted in court what its EMS staff had said and done.]

June 1999: Emmon Bodfish is found bludgeoned to death in his home in Orinda, CA. Born Margaret Bodfish, Emmon had lived as a man for at least 16 years. His son, Max Wills, dies the following day, an apparent suicide, found in a Santa Monica hotel room with his wrists and throat slashed. Most of the media, including the gay paper *The Bay Area Reporter*, repeatedly persist in calling Emmon "her" in their coverage.

The transgender people I know talk about childhood years filled with isolation and confusion; of growing up to face a world with too few options and too many people who are dangerous because of their ignorance and fear. I find myself in awe when I realize how they have faced that world and powerfully taken their places in it. A world requiring so much courage just to be the person you know you are creates a lot of quiet heroes, and a few louder ones like Gwen Smith.

When I apologized to Gwen because this article wouldn't be coming out until August, she was gracious: "Don't worry about that. I'm just glad that anyone is talking about it at all."

As I said, the stories have to be told.

Kat Page has recently taken over as head event coordinator for *Anything That Grooves*, where she poses as Madame Full Charge. She is a polyamorous bisexual Witch who sings the blues, writes short stories and believes that every lesson worth learning happens in the street.

The Fine Art of White Picket Fence-Sitting: *Bisexuality, Marriage, and Family Diversity*

by Marshall Miller and Dorian Solot

"We cannot choose the way we love, but we can choose the way we live."

— Minnie Bruce Pratt

In the debate that's raging in this country over same-sex marriage, we bisexuals have a unique vantage point. When we love and have relationships with someone whose gender is different from ours, we experience firsthand the privileges and norms of a heterosexual culture that wishes all male-female couples to marry, procreate, and be happy. When we love and have relationships with someone of our own gender, we experience firsthand the realities of a homophobic culture that refuses to allow same-sex couples to marry.

Indeed, Robert Knight, writing in the *Washington Times*, argued against equal rights for gays, lesbians, and bisexuals because he said that they would "put the federal government officially in support of promiscuity since bisexuals by definition have sex with more than one person." Clearly, the man is a homophobe, a biphobe, a polyphobe, and he needs a good education in Bisexuality 101. But what would we tell him about bisexual marriage?

Bisexual marriage? Who's ever heard of such a thing?

It's hard to say, exactly, what a bisexual marriage might be. It could be a marriage of two bisexual people — that is, assuming their genders fit the current standard as to who is allowed to get married. Or maybe it looks like the model our octogenarian gay friend called the "perfect bisexual family": a man and a woman, married with children, each with a secondary same-sex partner. Just imagine, they could all live in the same house, keep a few cats, clip coupons, and go for Sunday drives. Could two bisexual women or two bisexual men who have a commitment ceremony consider theirs a bisexual marriage? Clearly, the term doesn't lend itself to tidy definition.

Bisexuals don't simultaneously need a partner of each gender, but perhaps we have an edge on our monosexual peers in terms of thinking about marriage. We know the potential and may have experienced the reality of falling in love with not just one gender, but at least two. We know all too well how arbitrary the gender of our partners can be. Our love for

our transgendered partners and friends reminds us how genders can change while love remains. And we realize that whatever our current relationship status, no guarantees exist that the cards (or at least their genders) won't look very different in the lifetime game of chance.

While some lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered activists fight the same-sex marriage battle, others wonder whether marriage is really what we want. Paula Ettelbrick, a nationally renowned lesbian attorney and family advocate, argues that focusing the community's energy on legalizing same-sex marriage draws our attention away from the more important struggle to gain public acceptance for sexual diversity. She writes, "A better goal for our community would be to expand the definition of family, rather than confine ourselves to marriage." Growing numbers of people of all sexual orientations agree with her, concluding that as a long-term investment, the marriage stock's past performance isn't much of a selling point. Like so many others, we decided that life outside the marriage box worked better for us. But it quickly became clear that though we were in good company — 11 million other Americans are currently living with an unmarried partner — no one was speaking up for our rights and perspectives as a constituency. Our national organization, the Alternatives to Marriage Project, was born.

The Alternatives to Marriage Project's inaugural act was a workshop, "Happiness Without Wedding Bells? Exploring Alternatives to Marriage" at last year's International Conference on Bisexuality. The attendees there seemed to relish brainstorming the reasons people get married — and also why they don't.

Often the reasons bisexuals give for being in unmarried relationships are similar to the ones given by heterosexuals. People who have been divorced ("been there, done that") sometimes feel less of an urge to fulfill a white-veiled marriage fantasy. Senior citizens and the disabled sometimes can't afford to marry if it would mean losing a pension from a deceased spouse or another form of financial support. Some people don't want to get married because, despite their commitment to and love for their partners, they feel unable to make an honest promise to stay in the relationship "till death do us part." As one woman we talked to said, "I can't promise that the person I am 60 years from now is going to love the person you're going to be 60 years from now because I don't

know who I'll be and I don't know who you'll be. All I can promise is the foreseeable future."

But two other reasons not to get hitched are particularly close to home for bi people. One is that they can't — not everyone has the legal option of marrying his or her partner(s). Other bi folks who do have the freedom to marry their partners choose not to in solidarity with those who can't. Many in this group, who recognize the privilege of their male-female partnerships, say that taking advantage of a privilege not available to so many others would make them uncomfortable. One lesbian said this about her experience being invited to weddings: "I can't legally marry my partner of many years. I feel like they're asking me to come and stand outside in the snow looking in the window while they're in there having a good time and eating and partying. I'm not allowed to participate and be part of the party, but they want me to come and cheer them on that they're in there doing it."

Some bisexuals, identifying with how it can feel to be the one standing in the snow, decide not to have the party unless everyone can be invited. Even some churches have added their institutional support. The congregation of the Edgehill United Methodist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, decided that until the parent United Methodist Church allows same-sex couples to get married, they would not allow their church to be used for any marriage.

It's important for us to clarify that we're not opposed to marriage. We don't begrudge happily married people their joy, their years together, or their decision that marriage was a good way for them to define and find support for their relationships. Some people want or need the 1,049 legal rights and responsibilities that kick in automatically when a couple gets married, the sense of security that some find marriage adds to their relationship, the religious blessings, and the validation and support of family and friends who now have a framework for understanding the relationship.

Being a married bisexual — and plenty of them exist — surely does not make you a bad person. But it does put you in a position of privilege, in the way that men are privileged in this culture. Feminism asks of men what they personally are going to do to change the sexism and misogyny that exists in the world and build gender equity. Marriage raises that same challenge: If you, as a bisexual, want and can get married, great.



MARSHALL MILLER AND DORIAN SOLOT, WHO'VE SAID, "NO, THANK YOU!" TO WEDDING RINGS.

Now what are you going to do about everybody else?

So say you are a married bisexual, or are planning to get married. How can you practice responsible ownership of that privilege? Obviously, there are no right or wrong answers, but here are four that we have been talking about recently.

1. *Stay visible.*

Marriage is held up by the Religious Right as a cure to homosexuality. Isn't it amusing that the most famous bisexual married couple in this country right now may be John and Anne Paulk, who work for Focus on the Family? After their debut as the "ex-gay" and "ex-lesbian" in last summer's homophobic newspaper ads, they've appeared on the cover of Newsweek and on Oprah. As the bisexual response ad aptly pointed out, the Paulks may well be as happily married as they claim to be because, potentially, their bisexual desires include an ability to love different as well as same-sex partners.

But too many people turn into "ex-bisexuals" once they get married. They fade from the community, no longer feel the need to work for justice, and start checking the "heterosexual" box at the doctor's office ("I'm monogamous," they explain, "so it's none of my doctor's business."). Using marriage to help your bisexuality become invisible is a way of taking advantage of your privilege.

2. *Fight for all relationships and families to be treated equally in your workplace.*

Since the United States does not provide health care for all its citizens, many people receive health insurance and other benefits through their job or their spouse's job. These work-related benefits are worth a lot: on average, benefits make up 40% of a worker's total compensation. The good news is that a tide of inclusiveness (or competition for skilled workers, depending on your cynicism) is sweeping the nation, and many employers are realizing that restricting family benefits only to married employees violates the concept of equal pay for equal work.

If your employer hasn't yet seen the light and implemented domestic partner benefits, a cafeteria-style benefits plan, or another way of treating all employees' families equally, do what you can to change things. Push for plans that are inclusive of people regardless of gender and sexual orientation. Same-sex only plans — while a significant step toward recognizing same-sex gay, lesbian, and bi couples — are

See "White Picket Fence-Sitting" (p.22)

"Picket Fence-Sitting" (from p.21)

usually viewed as a temporary measure "until same-sex marriage is legalized," not a fundamental shift in supporting all employees' families. Same-sex only plans also have the unintended effect of punishing or rewarding transgendered and transsexual employees (or employees with trans partners) by bestowing or withdrawing benefits based on one's legal sex (does your company really want to tell a long-term lesbian couple that since one of them recently transitioned and is legally a man, they will have to marry in order to continue to be eligible for benefits?). On average, inclusive domestic partner plans increase an employers' costs only 1%.

3. Brush up on your marital status etiquette. (What, can't find a marital status etiquette guide at Barnes and Noble?)

Don't ask unmarried people when they're going to get married. Instead, do the harder work of understanding what their relationship means to them. What do they call each other? How do they want to fit into each other's circles of friends and family? Do they celebrate an anniversary? And don't make insensitive remarks about the breakup of the relationship, like (citing from real-life experiences) "Your girlfriend is really cute! Let me know if you break up so I can ask her out," or "I think you and Al would stay on really good terms if you ever broke up." You wouldn't tell your married friends, "Your husband is so hot! Let me know if you get divorced so I can date him," or "I think you and Leah could have a really amicable divorce."

4. See yourself as part of the family diversity movement.

Despite the stereotypical "family" image of a man, a woman, children, and a picket fence, fewer than 25% of American households actually consist of a married couple and their children — we haven't been able to find any statistics on white picket fences.

Families today and throughout history have taken an endless number of forms, including BGLT families, unmarried couples, single people, stepfamilies, blended families, single-parent families, adoptive and foster families, grandparents parenting grandchildren, multiracial families, adult relatives living together,



MARSHALL AND DORIAN ADVOCATED FOR DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP LEGISLATION AT THE EQUALITY BEGINS AT HOME RALLY IN BOSTON.

people with multiple partners, people having children through surrogates and reproductive technologies, and people choosing not to have children. The myth of the nuclear family hurts not only BGLT families, but the majority of Americans, since it defines "family" in a way that excludes our living, thriving diversity.

"Family" remains a powerful concept by which legal rights, social legitimacy, and cultural support are

determined. Traditionally, each subgroup of "alternative family" has fought to be added to the definition. LGBT parents fight to have their own needs met, childfree networks have formed to support those who choose not to have children, magazines for multiracial families have emerged, and we've joined the fray with our own organization for people living without marriage.

But our own journey is leading us to realize that we've all neglected to ask the larger question: What is a family? Instead of chiseling away at an arbitrary old definition to include the children we adopt or the partners we don't marry, it's time that we created coalitions to begin sculpting new definitions.

Of course we'd want a bisexual perspective included in our family-defining coalitions, because bisexuals have families, are part of families, and have a perspective from our fence-sitting perch that may be different from those standing solidly on one side or the other. But the point is not to tell anyone what a bisexual relationship, a bisexual marriage, or a bisexual family looks like. Rather, we need to challenge ourselves to create a world where all families and relationships — not just straight or bisexual ones — are respected and valued regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, and family structure.

Marshall and Dorian, a Boston-area bi couple, present workshops on sex, relationships, and BGLT issues. They're also the founders of The Alternatives to Marriage Project, a national organization that provides resources, advocacy, and support to people who have chosen not to marry, are unable to marry, or are in the process of deciding whether marriage is right for them. For more info, contact Marshall and Dorian at atmp@unmarried.org, 781-793-9911, or see their Web site, www.unmarried.org.



THIS LOS ANGELES BILLBOARD IS ONE SMALL INDICATION OF AMERICA'S MARRIAGE CULTURE.

THE MATHEMATICS OF LOVE

BY SANDRA ALLAND

23 sexual partners (21 lovers/10 loves)

18 men

5 women

6 bisexuals

(?)

14 with unsafe oral sex, 4 mutual masturbations

5 cases of penis/vagina intercourse (3 of same w/out a condom)

0 pregnancies

divide by four drug abusers, two long-term relationships, nine that never went
past kissing, four who sucked my toes, four who made me cum,
five I came with, two I left

x 1 long distance 8 sexists 2 years on the pill 1 brush with cervical cancer
2 who liked blood 2 on blood-thinners 4 AIDS tests 1 rape

cosi(g)n 3 leases

+

3 anal fetishes

7 talented lovers

10 good kissers

(subtract 8 that I regret)

factor in 4 with the same name 1 with my name
1 from each America

-United States of
-Central
-and South

one (Indonesian/South Asian/Jewish/partially Japanese)

15.5 White, 2 Black, 1 French, 1 with a disability, 3 short, 1 tall, 3 vegetarian

1 musician, 2 poets, 3 actors, 4 abusive
at least 5 who were abused

>9 when I was <15

(carry the) 1 relative

= 23 human beings

Sandra Alland is a Canadian/Scottish writer, activist and performer. Her poetry has most recently been published in Fireweed, Tessera, Prism International, and Canadian Women Studies.

Resources for Bisexual Families

Bisexual family issues cover a range of topics, from relationship choices to domestic partner benefits to coming out to adoption. The following resources could never cover all of this diversity, but they are an excellent place to start in your search for community, legal advice or information. Each is nationally focused and bisexual-inclusive.

Alt.polyamory

News group and resources for polyamorous individuals.

www.polyamory.org/SF/mail-lists.html



Alternative Family Project

Provides a phone referral service for questions relevant to creating, sustaining and living in alternative families.

425 Divisadero St., Suite 203

San Francisco, CA 94117

(415) 436-9000

Email: afp@baylinks.com

Web site: www.baylinks.com/~afp

ALTERNATIVES TO MARRIAGE PROJECT

Provides resources, support, and advocacy to people who choose not to marry, are unable to marry, or are deciding whether marriage is right for them.

P.O. Box 991010

Boston, MA 02199

(781) 793-9911

Email: atmp@unmarried.org

Web site: www.unmarried.org



Bisexual Resource Center

Research, education, support, and publications for bisexuals.

P.O. Box 400639

Cambridge, MA 02140

Email: brc@biresouce.org

Web site: www.biresouce.org



Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere (COLAGE)

Advocacy, support, and newsletter for children of BGLT parents.

3543 18th St., #17

San Francisco, CA 94110

(415) 861-5437

Email: kidsofgays@colage.org

Web Site: www.colage.org



The Council on Contemporary Families

Council on Contemporary Families

Organization of family researchers, theorists, and practitioners dedicated to transforming discussion of families from "traditional" versus "non-traditional" to one more useful for contemporary families' needs.

2785 Buena Vista Way

Berkeley, CA 95708

(510) 845-8277

Email: 110762,667@compuserve.com

Web Site: www.slip.net/~ccf



COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

FENWAY

Fenway Community Health Center Lesbian/Gay Family & Parenting Services

Alternative insemination support and information, support groups, parenting services and primary health care for the BGLT community.

7 Haviland St.

Boston, MA 02115

(617) 927-6300

Email: lcoulidge@fchc.org

Web Sites: www.fchc.org

LOVING MORE

Loving More: New Models for Relationships

Magazine and organization that provides information and networking for individuals committed to and exploring responsible non-monogamy and/or polyamory.

P.O. Box 4358

Boulder, CO 80306

Web Site: www.lovemore.com



National Center for Lesbian Rights

Provides representation and resources for lesbians, gay men and

transgendered individuals. They have several publications related BGLT parenting issues, including adoption, HIV+ people parenting, and child custody.

870 Market St., Suite 570

San Francisco, CA 94102

(415) 392-6257

Email: info@NCLRights.org

Web Site: www.NCLRights.org



Progressive civil rights organization advocating on local, state and national level for BGLT rights.

1700 Kalorama Rd., N.W.

Washington, DC 20009

(202) 332-6483

Email: nglftf@nglftf.org

Web Site: www.nglftf.org



Parents, Families, &
Friends of Lesbians and
Gays (P-FLAG)

Support and activist
organization for relatives

and allies of the BGLT community.

1101 14th St., N.W., Suite 1030

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Books

There are many books being published
on queer families, from creating a com-
mitment ceremony to partnering with
someone who already has children to
adopting your own. Unfortunately, not
all are bisexual-inclusive. An excellent
resource for these titles is A Different
Light bookstore, which can be contact-
ed at www.adlbooks.com/~adl,
adl@adlbooks.com or (800) 343-4002.
I particularly recommend *The Ultimate
Guide to Pregnancy for Lesbians* by
Rachel Pepper (Cleis Press, 1999) for
anyone considering pregnancy, but
especially BGLT families.

LOVE MAKES A FAMILY

In celebration of National
Coming Out Day on Oct. 11 and
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Themes, and "Recommended for all public libraries" by the *Library
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Buy *Love Makes a Family* at your local bookstore, purchase
it direct from UMass Press by calling 413-545-2219, or order online
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This is a wonderful way to come out or to be an ally to the
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For more information about
the *Love Makes a Family* exhibit
and book, visit this Web site:
<http://www.lovemakesafamily.org>
The exhibit travels nationwide to
schools, colleges, workplaces,
conferences, community centers,
churches, etc. You can bring it to
your community too!

ABOVE: BI MOM LYNNE POLITO

LEFT: LYNNE WITH BABY SOPHIE

PHOTOS BY GIGI KAESER FROM THE EXHIBIT/
BOOK, LOVE MAKES A FAMILY: PORTRAITS
OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND
TRANSGENDER PEOPLE



AUTHOR EVE DIANA WITH
HER PARTNER JOHN,
HER SON JULIAN, AND
HER MOTHER LILLIAN
AT BOSTON GAY PRIDE
IN 1997.

Tears

Text and Photographs by Eve Diana

"Mommy, why did they throw tear gas at us?"

These are my three-year-old son's words to me after our family was attacked this weekend while marching in San Diego's Gay and Lesbian Pride March.

We had begun the annual festivity with a group of 70 children, parents and grandparents. Our contingency, Family Matters, had been named this year's Outstanding Community Organization. We planned to follow the march route through downtown San Diego and spend the rest of the day at the Pride Festival in Balboa Park.

My family proudly wore matching shirts festooned with custom made rainbow signs: mine read "Queer by Nature" (because I truly believe I am and always have been), John (my best friend and partner, who is heterosexual) wore "Queer by Association" and our son Julian wore "Queer by Heritage."

This was our day to celebrate our community and our pride in who we are. Gay Pride is our carnival, our old-home week, our family reunion.

A few minutes into the march, the unthinkable happened: someone threw a tear gas canister that landed and exploded just beside the families.

I saw the column of smoke and people racing away. I heard the screams. But my mind couldn't register what was happening until I tried to draw a breath and felt my throat on fire. John raced down the street with Julian's stroller, and I followed as best I could. Having recently recovered from pneumonia, my lungs were already in a weakened condition — I couldn't keep up. John kept turning to look for me; I kept waving him on. "Run! Get Julian out of here!" I kept stopping

to cough and try to breathe, a futile effort. Two strangers grabbed my arms and pulled me along with them, retching and choking.

Finally, I met up with them blocks away. Julian was screaming in pain and terror. John didn't want to stop to pick him up and tried to comfort him with words as we ran. "You're okay, baby. Mommy and Daddy are right here. You'll be fine sweetheart." I grabbed John's arm and we continued our escape as fast as we could manage.

When we finally felt safely out of range of the smoke, John got him out of the stroller, and I poured the contents of my water bottle onto a tissue and we wiped his face and eyes. He drank some juice and finally calmed. John was also okay once he washed his own face and eyes. I was still gasping. Snot and spit streamed from my nose and mouth. My tears burned my face when they made contact with my skin.

I wanted to go home. John insisted, "It's important for us to go back and finish the march." He was right. More than ever, our visibility was vital, particularly in the face of the terrorist who wanted us all to disappear.

So we marched to the bitter end: Julian clinging to John's neck, the two of us pushing the empty stroller, our tattered signs peeling off our bodies, me alternately sobbing and coughing, trying to acknowledge the cheers of the crowds who encouraged us every step of the way. There was no triumphant celebration for us when we reached the end at Balboa Park. John pushed Julian on the swings while I sat on the grass choking and spitting.

We went home, put our son to bed and watched the news. The hate crime received only a brief mention. None of the coverage noted that the attacker had targeted babies, young children, and pregnant women, sending four of them to the hospital. John went out to buy Captain Crunch cereal for me. As a comfort food, it was a bad choice — I discovered my mouth bled when I ate it.

Sunday we returned to the Pride Festival, mostly hoping to connect with other "survivors". Because the group we were marching with had scattered, I needed to know how everyone was. And to talk about it. It was a beginning.

Two days later, I'm still coughing and the burns on my face are peeling. My son has asked me repeatedly, "Why did they throw tear gas at us?"

How do I explain hatred to my son when I don't understand it myself? The only answer I could give him was that some people do very mean things. I compared it to the bullies he's encountered at school. I did not tell him that this is what happens when bullies grow up and can buy deadly weapons. We will continue to encourage him to talk about it, even if I can't give him an answer that makes it all better.

What I can't shake is a deep feeling of sadness that my family's safety shield has been pierced. Everyone's got one — the mental protection that lets you operate day to day in spite of the frightening and violent world around us. But after Saturday's in-your-face incident, and someone scrawling "FAG" on our car last week, I feel as though my shield has been ripped away, and all I want to do is hide. I've had flashbacks repeatedly since the incident, and find myself crying at my computer as my throat burns at the memory.

The attacker has not been found. The reward offered for information leading to his arrest grows. A longtime activist, I now feel leaden and paralyzed. I couldn't protect my son from this horror, and next time it might be worse. We all paid a price for choosing to be visible as a queer family. My son, who has yet to touch a toy weapon or view a violent television program, now knows what a hate crime is.

I'm trying to react as a responsible parent. Be an adult, Eve. Don't wallow. Turn this, somehow, into something useful. Bring the issue to my son's school as an object lesson: that intolerance is the true evil, not other people. Teach the children NOW how to deal with anger in healthy ways. Teach them not to fear and hate people who are different from themselves. Teach them that queer families are just that: families, loving and imperfect and overextended and boring and just like every other color and breed of family out there.

But more than that, I want my son to go to sleep at night still believing that his parents can keep him safe. I want to approach my car with its purple Tinky-Winky doll on the dashboard and its rainbow bumper stickers without a sick sense of apprehension about what graffiti I might find on it. I want my mouth to heal so I can eat Captain Crunch again. I want to give my son back his peace of mind.

I want mine back, too.

Eve Diana describes herself as a passionate mom-writer-dreamer-queer-nerdgeek-activist. She earns a paycheck by making order out of chaos, is a mom for love, and writes to maintain her peace of mind. She can be reached at evediana@cts.com.



JULIAN, AT THE MORE PEACEFUL END OF BOSTON GAY PRIDE 1997.

Legal Protections for the Alternative Family

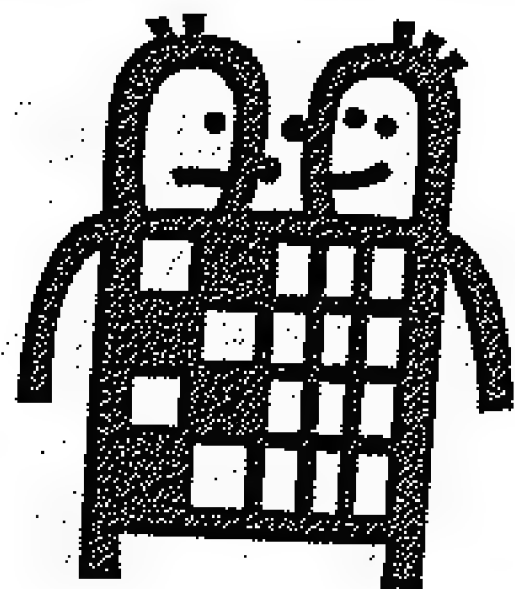
by Elizabeth F. Schwartz

Those of us who are coloring outside the lines in our conception and formation of family must be particularly mindful of the legal consequences of our choices. More than one thousand rights are associated with civil marriage, and we can claim about a dozen crucial ones for ourselves through effective estate planning and contracts. We face obstacles in many areas including inheritance, health care planning and parenting. So listen up, folks — these are your issues to face. Give yourself and those you love the respect of self-protection.

Estate Planning Tools

The primary means through which alternative families use the law to their advantage is estate planning. This means using certain tools the law provides to state what you want to have happen to yourself and your stuff in the event of incapacity or death. Because our relationships are not always recognized by the law, we have to worry about making our intentions known in the legally recognizable way that heterosexual married couples take for granted.

The law presumes that, if you are not married, you want your "next of kin" to receive all of your property and make all your medical decisions. The "kin" may be your kids or parents, but they will never be your partner unless you are married. Fortunately, you can prepare an estate plan through which you make different choices about how you want those matters handled when the time comes. You can make your wishes come to pass, whatever they might be.

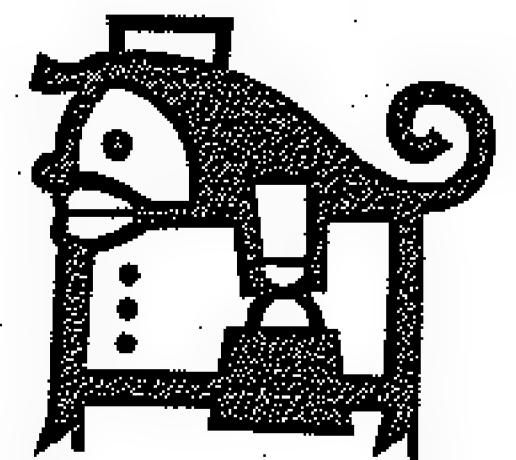


Everyone needs a will

Yes, even if you do not have much money or own any real estate, a will is a simple way to make your intentions clear. Otherwise, your lover or family of choice will be at the mercy of your biological family. Even if they seem cool now, they might be less so when they are asked to give up rights and property which, even if morally obligated from one point of view, they have no legal obligation to surrender. Death brings out the worst in people, especially family members looking for someone to blame.

Making medical decisions

My law firm has gotten countless calls from distraught people who cannot get access to their lovers in the hospital because they are not considered "family." By drafting a Designation of Health Care Surrogate, you can state who you want to make important medical decisions for you in the event that you are unable to communicate them yourself.



If you become incapacitated — in other words, if a court determines you are unable to handle your medical and financial decisions — a guardian may be appointed for you. Drafting a simple Designation of Preneed Guardian would avoid a fight between your lover and your family because it allows you to state for yourself whom you would want to serve as your guardian if you ever needed one.

Property ownership

Often called the "poor man's estate planning", titling your home and bank accounts jointly with designated rights of survivorship, means that in the event of death, the property automatically passes to the surviving partner. In most states, the title must specifically state joint tenants with rights of survivorship, or J.T.W.R.O.S., for ownership to pass to the survivor. Otherwise, the presumption is that the property was held as "tenants in common", which means each person's half passes to the next of kin if there is no valid will stating otherwise. That can result in a real mess if there is no estate plan in place.



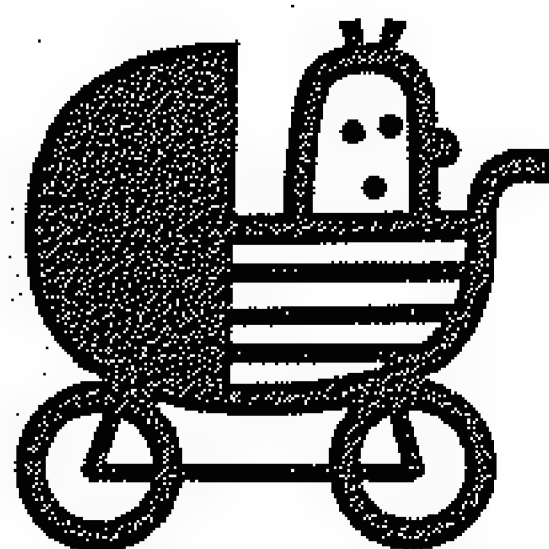
Parenting Concerns

As an increasing number of non-marrieds decide to take the parenting challenge, we are learning creative ways to protect ourselves, our children, and, in the case of co-parents, our partners. Unfortunately, given that ours is a homophobic legal system and emotions run particularly high when it comes to

children, we must be especially careful to arm ourselves with knowledge and, frequently, document our intentions. What happens to children when a non-married couple breaks up or when the biological parent becomes incapacitated or dies?

The situation for non-biological parents is grave and extraordinarily painful, and one that is the subject of many court cases across the nation. Sporadic court decisions around the country, mostly in California, recognize the parental rights of non-biological mothers, but mostly the presumption is that these women are "legal strangers" to their kids because there is no blood relationship. Again, we are faced with the real pain of invisibility.

This kind of situation has unfortunately become all too common in our community. People are not managing their affairs properly when they separate and our kids are paying the costs. It is crucial that, as co-parenting non-marrieds, we avail ourselves of all available resources to document our intentions that both be considered legal parents.



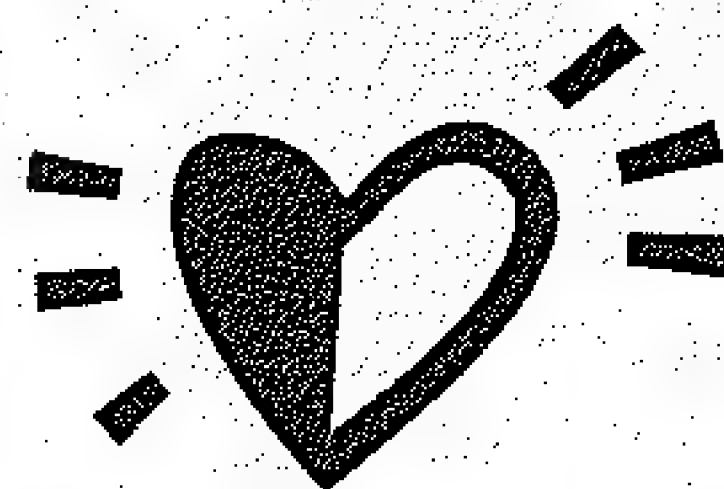
Such a document, commonly called a Co-Parenting Agreement, should clearly state the rights and responsibilities of each parent regarding any children born of them. There should be a global acknowledgement of the intention to cooperate with and respect one another and foster a healthy family. Keep the focus on the best interests of the children. Among the provisions to include are:

- * *Understanding that both parents are equally responsible for the child[ren]'s support, care, and expenses. Or, the contribution can be adjusted based on circumstances.*
- * *Understanding that the agreement presents legal questions that are unsettled.*
- * *Agreement that the non-biological parent will be given medical authorization and guardianship designation.*
- * *Statement that in the event of separation, the child's best interests will be strongly considered and a close relationship with both parents should be maintained.*
- * *Stipulation that, in the event of a dispute, the path of mediation shall be taken before proceeding directly into litigation.*

Of course, it is best to enter into a Co-Parenting Agreement before any children are conceived, and while the love relationship is happily intact. Hopefully, the breakup provisions of the Agreement will never be needed, but if they are, that will be the worst and toughest time to discuss these matters beneficially. It is precisely because this society is so hetero-oriented, and there is no system in place to handle our disputes, that we must take action to protect ourselves and document our intentions.

Summing up

So these are some of the basics. These topics can get quite complicated depending on your circumstances, so it's best to consult legal counsel to be sure you are protected. It could not be more important that you seek out sensitive and competent legal counsel to help prepare documents evidencing your intentions. Try to find a lawyer who is BGLT- or queer-friendly and with whom you feel comfortable. Ask him/her/hir about other documents which might be appropriate in your circumstances, such as a living together agreement to spell out the financial terms of your cohabitation.



Please do not wait for tragedy to befall you before you handle these matters. Mortality or the end of a relationship never are fun issues to face, but the results of avoiding them can be heartbreaking. Give yourself peace of mind, because you never quite know what twists and turns life's path will have for you. Protect yourself — you are worth it.

Elizabeth Schwartz is an associate in the law firm of Crockett & Chasen, P.A. in Miami Beach, Florida. She and her firm specialize in the legal representation of sexual minorities, including estate and health care planning, insemination, custody, tax-exempt organizations, as well as the large number of legal issues raised by HIV. She welcomes feedback at eschwartz@sobelaw.com.

Do You Want More?

Before you take the leap and go see a lawyer, you might want to dig a bit deeper into some of these issues. The following resources provide valuable information for alternative families:

Peter Berkery, Jr. *Personal Financial Planning for Gays & Lesbians: Our Guide to Prudent Decision Making*. Burr Ridge, Ill.: Irwin, 1996.

Paul Hampton Crockett. *HIV Law: A Survival Guide to the Legal System for People Living with HIV*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 1997.

Hayden Curry, Denis Clifford and Robin Leonard. *A Legal Guide for Lesbian and Gay Couples*. Berkeley: Nolo Press, 1996.

Fred Hertz. *Legal Affairs: Essential Advice for Same-Sex Couples*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998.

In addition, the San Francisco-based National Center for Lesbian Rights has an excellent catalogue of literature, including *Lesbians Choosing Motherhood: Legal Implications of Alternative Insemination and Reproductive Technologies*. They can be contacted at 415.392.6257 or visit www.NCLRights.org.

— Elizabeth Schwartz

Insomnia

by Jenny Bitner

*Not sleeping in a red room
not sleeping noise of traffic screeching by*

*not sleeping in the bed of a woman
I want to sleep with*

*not sleeping smelling pussy and bologna
on my fingers and lemon on my shirt*

*not sleeping and not reading and
not listening to music and not getting a phone call*

*not listening and seeing my past as far away
like a ship that has left port*

*not sleeping and scratching my waxy ear
not sleeping and dreaming of sleeping deeply*

*on velvet cushion and dreaming of bears
who will talk to women who still talk to women*

*although the repercussions are of course
enormous*

*not sleeping and not knowing
not sleeping and feeling the grit on my teeth*

*not sleeping and remembering piles of dog shit
I pick up with a plastic bread bag*

*not sleeping and wandering to bars to buy
a White Russian and smile at women*

*not sleeping and looking and thinking always
thinking not sleeping in my head*

*get out of my head out of my head not
not sleeping get out of my head*

Jenny Bitner is our much-beloved, and now much-missed, retiring Poetry Editor. Her patience, inspiration, humor and ability will be fondly remembered. Jenny has been on the ATM staff for longer than many of us can even remember, and it won't be the same without her. Again, thanks for everything.

ANYTHING THAT MOVES

Night of the Bear

by Jenny Bitner

*I am hungry, hungry for your mouth
I cannot wait another moment
before me on the snow you spread out —
say You must open yourself completely*

*like tantalizing stars, like before
numbers, surrender and trust so sweet*

*you would have thought it was a baby
and not a bear picking me up with one paw —*

*we roll down the hill and under the pine
trees his hands so big, a storm*

*made of this love — the gods turned people
into animals at whim. This bear*

*is scratching his claws in a tree stump
and then in my belly —*

*I look into the top of the pine tree
its maze and look a bird flying*

*into ice in the branches,
he says, this is like dying*

*he tells the girls Snow White and Rose
Red don't beat your lover dead*

*your father asleep on the hearth
it is not such a difference, flesh is*

*flesh, and even the animal
reacts to the blood.*

*draw back or pounce, admit I know
nothing of bears. This is a spirit*

*and I am in his mouth, whatever happens
between you and your daimon is*

*likely to turn over, frightened by our own hands
that can find exactly the spot*

*find the wound in a second
and the next my hands reaching through it*

*I see you in ways I only can as a lover,
and you see me in ways you only can*

*it is not necessary for all of us
at all times to wear all masks*

*I am wearing this one, moving my hands
through your skin, you are still, wounded*

*but strong. More afraid of your own
darkness than any in the world.*

The day my father returned from the October 1995 Million Man March was the turning point in our previously tenuous relationship.

Recently estranged from my family, I was confronting some heavy psychological and emotional issues regarding identity. Over a space of 18 months, I had married, become a father, quit a teaching job for an arts career, started divorce proceedings, and begun a live-in relationship with a woman 18 years my senior. The proactive manner in which I dealt with these events was extremely unsettling to my family, as it upset very long-standing traditions of unspoken parental control. My father was particularly shaken, as the life decisions I was making went against his very old-school expectations for his eldest son.

As a result, I was keenly aware of the sociological implications of "The March"; most immediately the patriarchal, heterosexist values it was attempting to engender. At the time, the prevailing notion in the Black community was that I, as a black man, had a cultural, spiritual and moral obligation to, in the words of Nation of Islam leader and March figurehead Minister Louis Farrakhan, "atone". I was

terribly that he could not persuade me to join up with the "right" side.

Never did we discuss my feelings. I knew deeply how unwelcome I was to the festivities he so wanted to share — at the pre-March rally, co-organizer Rev. George Stallings asked the crowd, "Do you want some sissified faggot leading you into the promised land?"

Nevertheless, it became obvious that despite their extreme ignorance of the March's sociopolitical implications, the vast majority of participants were incredibly genuine in their intent. I reluctantly assured my father that I would support him in spirit even though I refused to attend it myself.

Feeling a need to be the first person my father spoke to after this pilgrimage, I contacted him immediately upon his return.

I had never encountered him this excited about anything. "Aww, man, it was so wonderful. I wish you could have been there!" I could almost see him through the receiver. He was

We Are Family?

supposed to admit my sin of "abandoning the black woman and child", and thus reclaim my position as figurehead and pillar of the black family unit.

"Is this the Million Straight Man March?" I asked friends, relatives and colleagues, knowing full well the antagonistic responses I was soliciting. By verbalizing my discontent, I made it apparent that at least one man took issue with the event. It made me even angrier that the only conversations anyone wanted to have were variations on the "save the family" theme and rarely based in their own ideas or opinions.

My father was the exception, and I enjoyed conversations with him intensely during this time. These were the few times I could get him to step outside his divorced-father-trying-so-hard-to-be-the-good-dad posturing and tell me what he was really thinking.

"This is something that we need to do!" he would rail, speaking passionately of the black man's need to reclaim his role as a leader of the family and community. It frustrated him

crying and smiling and laughing with pride as he spoke of meeting men from across the country, engendered with this like spirit of brother/father/familyhood.

For the first time, I was able to step outside of myself and truly feel what he was saying.

At that moment, I understood him.

I understood the meaning of those few days in Washington. They were defining for a 60-year-old black man raised in a "colored-only" coal mining camp in West Virginia. He had escaped to the city, earned a degree, become a professional and raised a family; had come full circle, and was attempting to "pass the torch" to his son. The major irony of existence in black America became apparent to me: The very sociopolitical notions of "community" and "family" propagated by the March are what serve to keep many families apart.

Most of my early identity, as well as my notions of family and reality, were shaped by the "Post-Pantherist" era of 1970s



**text and illustrations
by Juba Kalamka**

Chicago, characterized by a burgeoning African-centered educational and literary movement. The movement reiterated much of the Black Panther Party's rhetoric with regard to cultural, political and economic self-determination.

The major difference came in its creation of a quasi-African culture, the central thrust of which was the strident edification of the black (read: hetero) family unit, as well as the building of a "black nation." These, in turn, contributed to a monolithic notion of African-American middle class values and identity politics.

It was at first extremely difficult to reconcile the anger I felt when, as an adult, I was directly able to identify and confront the dichotomies existing within this family/community framework.

There was a strong unspoken pressure to conform to the cultural norm, which is typical of marginalized, culturally oppressed communities new to the opportunity to create their own identities. Central to Africentrist/Black Nationalist rhetoric was, and is, the reclamation of community and the "nuclear family," which had been institutionally suppressed or destroyed by the American slavery experience. The notions of

patriarchy engendered by this politic, most exemplified by the desire to replace the Great White Father with the Greater Black Father, force people who do not fit neatly into the ready-made roles to hide within themselves or leave the community completely.

This "Black = good/White = evil" world-view, taught to me as a child, left very little room for the development of a personal identity. Ironically, my badge of "black manhood" didn't hamper my endeavors in the world at large, but rather predictably I was at a loss when relating to "my own," especially when they didn't live up to my self-imposed romantic ideals that encouraged me to ignore my instincts. Had I followed my instincts, many of my friends' and family's very human idiosyncrasies would have been apparent.

For example, the belief that black people were by nature more compassionate than any other race came into conflict with the cruelty I experienced at the hands of my family, classmates and "friends" for being "African boy," "black and ugly," "faggot" or simply not "cool" enough.

See "We Are Family?" (p.24)

We Are Family? (from p.23)

Dealing with allegedly more compassionate black women became particularly problematic as harsh reality came into direct conflict with the idyllic notions of black womanhood that were part of my daily indoctrination. As I understood, it was my responsibility as a black man (for no one else was worthy or capable) to uplift and edify the black woman and create a new "African nation" at any cost — "my total devotion, my total resources, and the total power of my mortal life," I recited daily in my schoolday pledge.

The development of a proto-sexist "save-a-hoe" mentality fostered the belief that the emotionally violent women I had dated behaved so because of my deficiencies as a black man.

A lecture received after I and a classmate were caught with our hands down each others' pants burned into my six-year old brain that black male sexuality was a potentially destructive force of galactic proportions. It was counterrevolutionary, I was told, to use my dick for anything other than making more young warriors for "the struggle."

Sexual identity issues were never discussed, though we existed in a familial construct in which membership depended on specific sexual behaviors. Broaching the subject was deemed unimportant or even detrimental to the goals of the community. Sexual identities — or, more accurately, concepts of sexual identities — were referred to in a manner indicative of the deep, painful cultural legacies attached to them, particularly in relationship to the sexual denigration that was central to American slavery.

I've actually had people tell me my sexual, political, spiritual and artistic sensibilities were developed by "hanging around too many white people." To this day there exists a strong intra-cultural notion that blacks have learned how to be queer, polyamorous, and so forth from "imitating" the behavior of whites.

These stereotypes contribute to the notion that black people are more homophobic than other cultures. It would be more accurate to say that our vociferousness is a by-product of our inability to behave prejudicially on an institutional level. Despite most posturing to the contrary, much of American black culture centers around being accepted and validated by the mainstream. More often than not,

this means divorcing yourself from anything that the prevailing culture says is abnormal — in this case, anything not heterosexual.

"I can't understand how black people can be so prejudiced when they've gone through so much as a community," a colleague said to me several years ago. "You'd think they'd be more sensitive."



I've jokingly referred to this behavioral phenomenon as Dennis Rodman Syndrome. Rodman has spoken publicly of his typically awkward adolescence, and his penchant for unusual self-expression; his life struggle for true self-determination in the context of defining "family" embodies that of so many people, who have been forced to choose one or the other.

"Ahhh, shit!" My father would moan disgustedly whenever "The Worm" skied across the television tube for a kazillionth rebound. "He's an embarrassment to us. He's not a good example of Black manhood! Would you want your son seeing a man wearing a dress like that?"

"I dress like that, Dad," goes the comic thought balloon over my head. "Rodman is me."

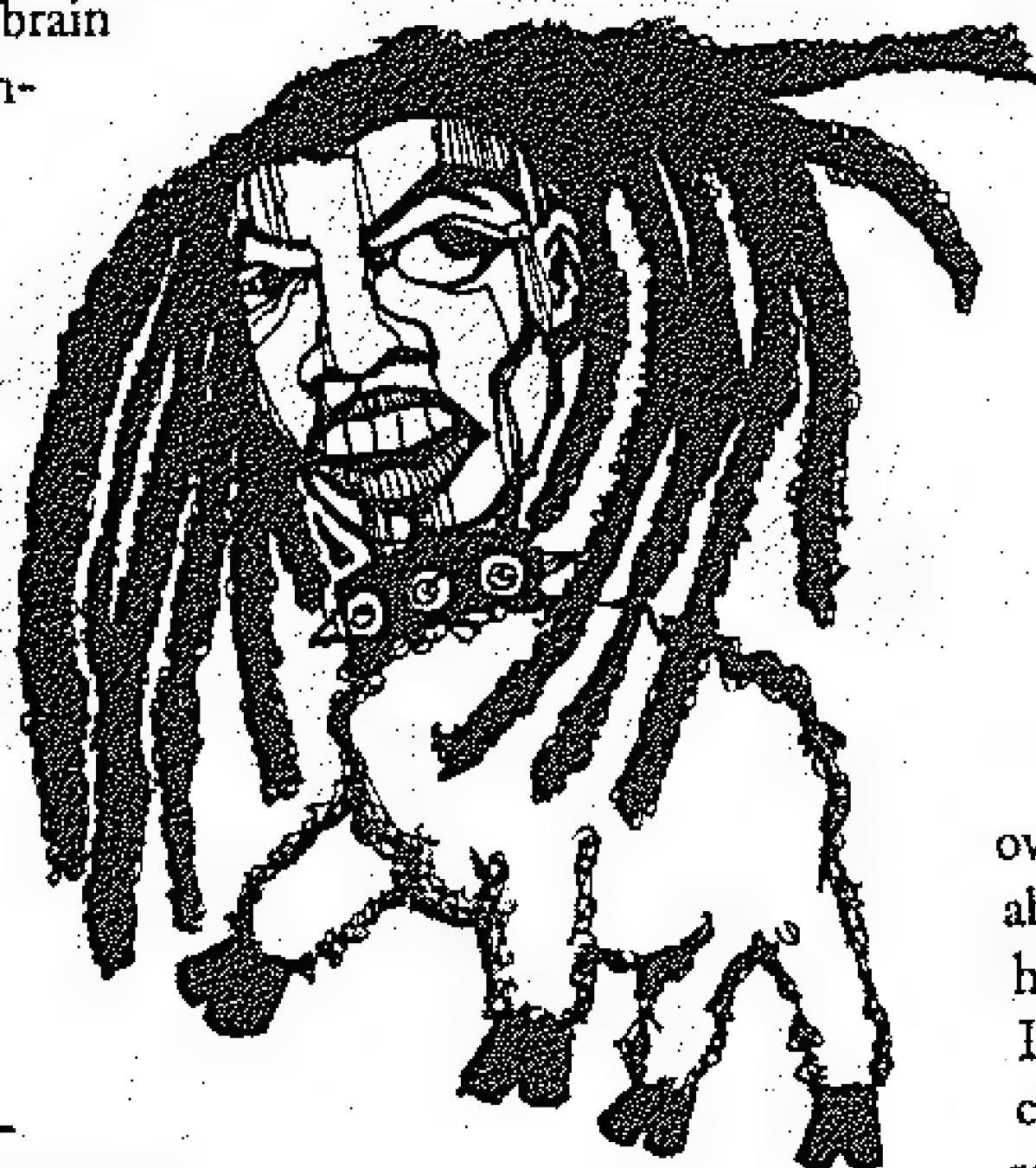
It took months of general arguments over coffee before we had a real conversation about my sexuality. When we did, I learned he'd long suspected I was gay or bisexual. I in turn realized that he was much more cognizant of Black intracultural issues regarding gender and sexuality than he'd previously let on. He related stories about the significant gay and bisexual membership of

black Greek-letter fraternities during his college days, and the many sexually diverse educators, scholars and political figures in our history.

Most interesting, though, was how the concern he articulated for my safety within the "gay lifestyle" was really about how he'd be perceived by his colleagues once they knew the truth about his "white-rocentric" son. "Please Juba, be careful, and look out for unscrupulous characters," was his standard warning when I mentioned any sex-related program or function I'd be attending.

"I'm that unscrupulous character you're talking about, Dad! I'll tell Dennis you said, 'What's up!' if I see him!"

"Ahhh, shit!" He waves me out the door, barely stifling a chuckle. "Both of you motherfuckers are crazy as hell."



Though the discomfort black people articulate at first seems connected to Rodman's "eccentric" aesthetic notions, it is actually more related to his perceived sexual ambiguity. He rather stylishly skewers the stereotypical image of the black male athlete who, through his fast-twitch muscle-driven hetero manpower, has been "accepted" — albeit uncomfortably so, and only as marketable icon — into the American mainstream.

Rodman is the proverbial "Bad Nigga," fucking up the image of normalcy that so many black Americans strive to maintain. After James Byrd was dragged to death behind a pickup truck outside of Rodman's hometown of Dallas, TX, Rodman sent significant financial aid to Byrd's family. The major black media failed to acknowledge it. After a number of conversations, I concluded that most people would have been more comfortable had one of Rodman's more famous "straight-acting" teammates made the donation.

"Well, he's redeemed himself a little," my father says now.

Yet and still, it would be disingenuous to suggest that these notions are entirely heterosexist. Though greatly rooted in external forces, internalized bi-trans-homo-eroto-phobia has led many people to zealously protect the dark corners of the community we are allowed to occupy in "the 'hood." Musicians, visual artists, dancers and writers are expected to be "freaky," and are tolerated as such as long as they aren't too obvious in their behavior. The "church sissy" can reserve his space through anchoring the choir or teaching Sunday school.

This dynamic makes all the typical issues faced when coming to terms with one's sexual identity even more difficult. People are not only viewed as socially deviant, but as a relative of mine once put it, "traitors to race, gender and culture."

So where does this leave us? How do we deal with these issues in the context of "family?"

In the late Marlon Riggs' 1995 video work *Black Is, Black Ain't*, cultural essayist bell hooks speaks to a desire to see people change the concept of "community" to "communion" in hopes of creating a space in which dialogue can take place and difference is respected. To do so requires us to honestly examine the foundations of our concepts of family, and those individual life events and greater social phenomena which have shaped our world view.

My first inclination when asked to write this article was to attempt to come up with some practical, catch-all solution that would neatly address all the issues present, as well as the ones that were sure to be generated as I talked to more people. I reflexively began looking outward for answers, when the simplest was the most apparent. Rather than asking ourselves "how do I fit into family?" we should begin to challenge and redefine our notions of family, broadening it to include the

spaces in which our true, complete and evolving selves are nurtured, enriched and encouraged.

Advances in technology have made it quick, inexpensive and more convenient to communicate. The potential for individuals to create or join families is only limited by the number of people who have found that space and are willing to provide inspiration and encouragement. I hope to continue having the opportunities to provoke thought, and more important, self-actualization at the very least.

"Come back over here sometime so you can talk some more of that bullshit," my father says without a hint of irony, laughing while giving me a hug and one of those Black Man Soul Brother handshakes. "Now I know we disagree about a lot of stuff, but we're two intelligent men, and we can do that. And I don't want you to forget that I love you, son."

"I love you too dad."

Hope is alive.

Juba Kalamka is a multimedia freakydeek who wants you to do it, do it, do it 'til you're satisfied. Massage him at jubakalamka@hotmail.com.



Juba Kalamka and his life partner/strap-on baby, Ayanna U'Dongo, at their first San Francisco Pride Celebration.

BLEEDING

by Raven Kaldera

(Dedicated to all the lovers who put up with me while I was still finding myself. Thanks for not killing me out of frustration.)

Sexual preference has nothing to do with gender identity, right?

Right?

I mean, we're the ones who tell that to the shrinks, the talk shows, the questioning passers-by. We know the score. I know the score. I've said this, and I'll continue to say it, again and again.

So when somebody asks me about it in personal terms, not just rhetorical ones, why am I so confused?

1983: I'm a teenager, reading my boyfriend's porn. He thinks it'll help get me hot. I kind of like the idea of beating off to it, smearing the pages with my juices — but I'm too well brought up. My mother has taught me that sex is something you do to please other people. Maybe I could do it if he asked me to, but not on my own with him there. Besides, it's mostly lame.

Then I find it — the story about some dominatrix forcibly feminizing some guy, spanking him/her with her hairbrush and sodomizing him with a big rubber strap-on. I'm so turned on I hurt,

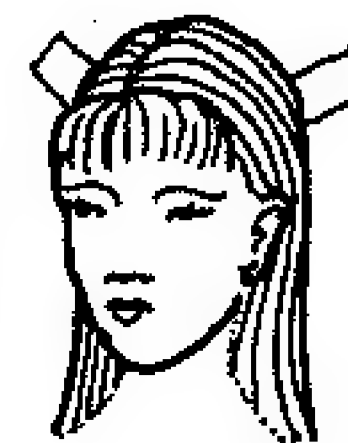


and while my boyfriend's back is turned with a phone call, I quickly beat off. I can't tell him, of course. What

would it say about me? A few weeks later, I go into his room, figuring I'd steal the mag for my own solitary bedroom adventures. He's thrown it out; it didn't have enough girls with big tits in it.

Gender isn't just about what you want your body to look like. I mean, that's all it *should* be, but culture tells us differently. Culture tells us that it's tied in to clothing, and walk, and speech, and hobbies, and of course who you want to fuck. We can tell ourselves that it's not so — and we'd be objectively right, too — but our groins

aren't interested in being right. The strands of cultural bias wind through our sexuality like tangled roots through a foundation. Even when we pull them out by the roots, their stain is still there, coloring our hard-ons and wetnesses with the color of the Lies. Even when we no longer fear to pursue what we've been told we shouldn't, it's still best when it's just slightly forbidden, when the taint of "shouldn't" runs over your tongue like a harsh coppery taste.



If you deny it, you'd be lying.

1988: I go to a party with a female friend who thinks I don't take care of my appearance. She's dressed me up, fussing over me and doing my makeup, until I feel like Meg in *Little Women*, except I'm not corseted. The one thing I draw the line at is shaving my legs.

I hate stubble. Halfway through the party she finds a guy to go home with and abandons me with cab fare and a ta-ta. While I wait for the cab, a polite young man comes up to me and asks, stam-

mering, if I'm a

cross-dresser. I react with fury and shame —

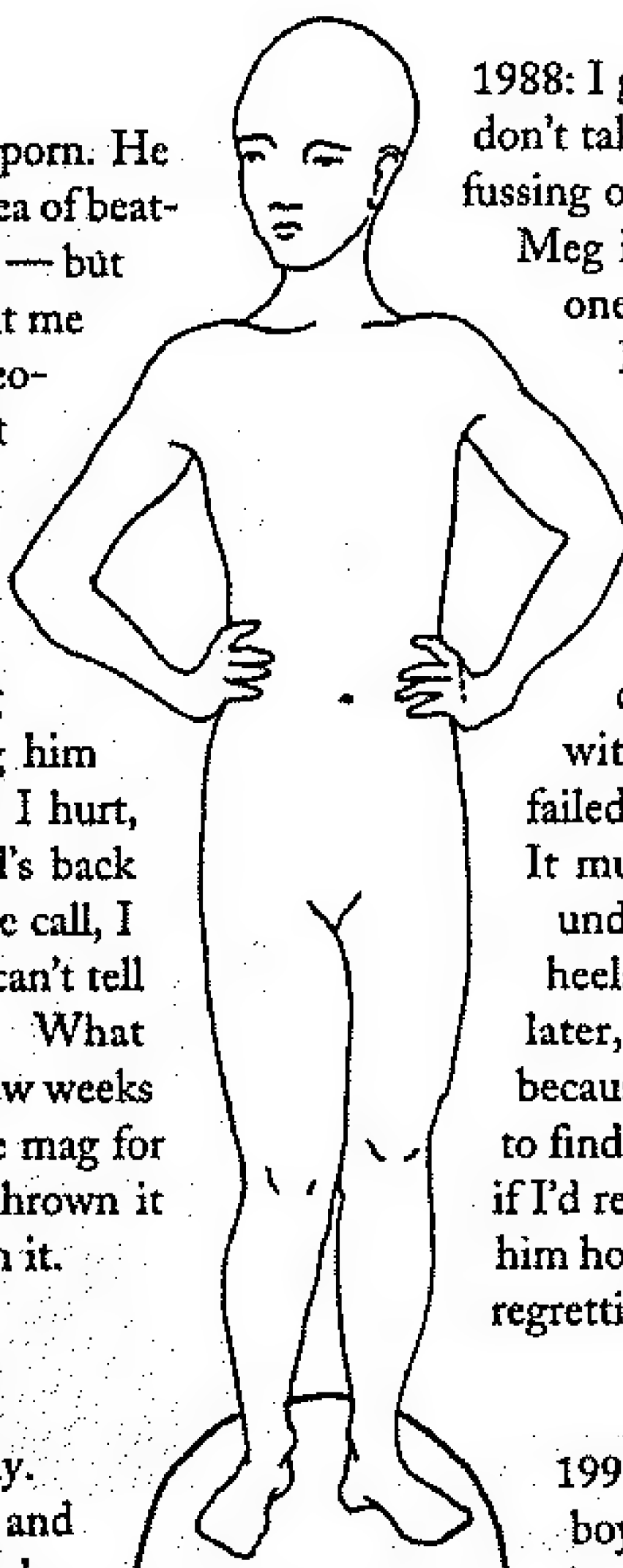


failed again! — and storm out.

It must have been the leg hair, visible

under my nylons, or that I kept tripping over my heels, or forgot to keep my knees together. Years later, looking back, I wonder if he was asking because *he* was one — maybe he desperately wanted to find someone who would be OK with it. I wonder, if I'd reacted differently, if I'd have been able to bring him home and dress him up and... well, there's no use regretting spilt milk.

1991: I'm freshly broken up with my post-divorce boyfriend, and for the first time since my teens I'm in love with someone who wears dresses. And black lingerie. At first I'm worried. She treats me like a woman treats a man; I'm not sure I'm comfortable with



COLORS

art by Amy Conger

that. I'm afraid I'll like it too much. And that's wrong, isn't it? By the time she insists on getting me a strap-on dildo harness, I'm really scared at how fast I'm taking to the role. After I actually use it, it's too late, I'm spoiled forever. I start packing it in my pants when we go to leather bars. Once some misogynist asshole in the bar sneered that real women don't really use dildos, that's just a fake thing in porn movies. He's standing three feet from me and one of the girls I've fucked as recently as that afternoon. And I'm packing. We both burst out laughing.

I'm an FTM. I'm not a man. I don't know what it feels like to be a man in the sense that my male lovers do, because I don't have their experience — of biology or upbringing. Still, when someone says "he," I smile. When they say "Sir," I get hard. Why? It seems that I'm using the role as a crutch to pretend that the body is right, that my flesh is the sort of flesh that society says ought to be referred to by that pronoun, that title. Does it matter what They think, what Their definition is? No, it shouldn't matter. It doesn't matter. Well, yes, it does, but only to my dick. That doesn't count, right?

1992: I'm terrified that my wife is really straight. I know she's slept mostly with men before me. If she's really straight, then I'll never be able to satisfy her... not just because I don't have a flesh cock, but because I don't act like a straight guy the way she acts like a straight girl. I'm going to change my body, to transition, but I don't want to act any different. I want to keep my hair long and make eye contact and maybe occasionally wear skirts. In other words, everything I do now only in a different body. What if I get read as a fag? How will she feel? What if my getting read as a fag gets her read as a gay drag queen? What then? Do I see disappointment in her eyes when I don't react in a particularly manly way, or am I imagining it?

She's totally supportive of my transition. What if, after all that work at being supportive, I don't turn out to be the man she hoped for?

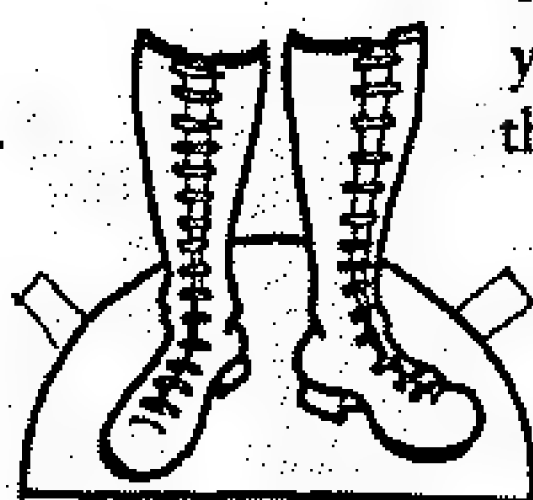
1993: I'm looking at photos taken of me in *Playboy* poses while I was still married to a guy. They were surprise birthday gift for my then-husband. I remember having them done; I had a terrible lust-on for the wife of the friend who took them, and although I later gave the pics to the man I lived with, I was really performing for her — slutting around in Frederick's of Hollywood lingerie, sticking dildos in my holes, while she watched huddled from the corner of the room, biting her lower lip while her eyes glinted with fascination... I didn't imagine it; her hand stole down between her legs and she was touching herself. I had no idea what turned her on. This femme drag show was the only thing I knew how to do that's sexy, the only thing I was trained to perform well. *Please be turned on, please like this*, I begged her with my eyes. *Please want me*. Her husband, behind his camera, was no fool. He didn't miss the sexual tension crackling across his bedroom, but when he suggested a threesome she — who is still claiming to be straight — backed off.

With shaking hands, I select the best and prettiest of the pictures to save and then snip up the rest into tiny bits and throw them away. My mother, with her feminine boot camp — dancing lessons, charm school, frilly dresses — taught me to be a drag queen. I cut up that smiling empty mask, the one that fooled everybody, all my exes, the world. The single remaining picture will be taped to my wall, a reminder. The Whore of Babylon. This power is not for you, you faker.

This is not my power.

It is your early training that molds your template. Translation: It is your early brainwashing that holds your crotch hostage, forever. You can purge your thought processes, your actions, your assumptions, your wardrobe, but the monster of your childhood will sneak around and get you from behind, get you where you least expect it, get

See "Bleeding Colors" (p.38)



"Bleeding Colors" (from p.37)

you where you have no control because control is the one thing that doesn't work in sex. Sex is about surrender — if to nothing else, then to the power of your own feeling. It's about far more than what seizes you up or what frightens you. It's also about what gets you hot that you hate, that you beat off over and then cry hot tears of shame for.



The anti-porn feminists were right to view arousal with suspicion, for in every one of us, the hard-on is the last outpost of the unacceptable that cannot be reasoned with. Including them. Including you. Including me.

1994: I'm on top of my wife, my lover, my girl, my sweet woman. I'm fucking her fast and hard. I started out slow and lyrical — her words — but as usual I get turned on and start to go faster, start to strive for my orgasm. She ceases to exist as a will and a being: just a soft, yielding body beneath me and a pair of perfect little breasts I can rest my head between as I hump and grunt, a slender waist I can squeeze. I'm a lousy butch. No, really, I'm bad at it. Butches are supposed to want to please their lovers, to put their lovers' pleasure first. I'm constantly fighting the swelling selfishness between my legs. When I'm being true to myself, my come comes first.

Not that she'd know the difference. She's a male-to-female transsexual who's mostly been with other men, men even more selfish than me, men who were abusive and alcoholic. Compared to many of them, I'm tender and considerate. She doesn't know how to be a femme lesbian, even in her first real relationship with someone with tits, engineer boots, and a goatee.



She doesn't know any better, doesn't know what a shit I really am. I know exactly how she feels. I've been there, on my back, legs in the air, grateful that it doesn't suck, not knowing it could be any better, waiting for the guy on top of me to just hurry up and get done already. Right now I'm every guy I lay under, I'm fucking my blind, empty ignorance. Coming and not caring.

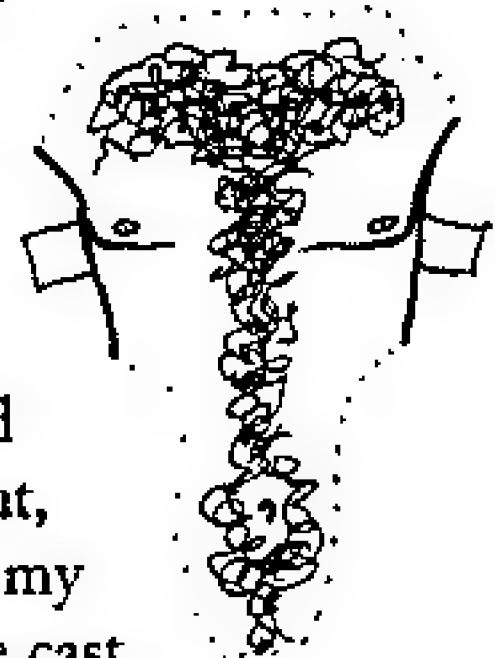
And just before I come, just in that moment of *yesyesyesyes*, I realize that I want to knock her up. Of course it's impossible, but I want to squirt jism into her and make her pregnant. I've borne a child, I've squeezed it out and breastfed it and changed its diapers, and I never once actually wanted to procreate. Now, some atavistic mis-programming stirring in my brain, I moan and come, twitching against her, imagining a spew of glittering ejaculate bursting into her. Never mind that the dick's rubber. That was my seed.



1995: My boy and I walk down the street together. My jacket is black denim, his is brown leather bomber-style. Our boots match. I grab his cute ass as we board the bus. He calls me Papa, Sir, sometimes Master, while he takes the strokes of my belt and sucks my cock and spreads his ass cheeks for me. I've taken to fag sex like a duck to water, although most of the real fags I know think we're dykes. So do the people walking down the street and seeing us. Are we? All I know is that I feel more male when I'm fucking him than at any other time.

There are differences between us, differences that will eventually split us apart. I'm signing up for hormones. S/he's not. That's the biggest. I'm going where s/he can't bear to look, rushing ahead, drooling with anticipation.

If women are pink or red, like their labia, and men are blue like the sky (not that I really believe any of that) then their passion, the shadow they cast together, must be purple, deep purple. I don't understand purple. Maybe that's because I'm not red or blue, I'm yellow. (I always hated yellow. It was my least favorite color. Then someone psychic told me that my aura was yellow. Ouch.)



With men, I cast green; with women, orange. I've never been to purple. When I was being a woman, I painted red over my skin, but the yellow bled out, made a sickly shade of brown in my relationships with men, gave an orange cast that lay between me and women. Of course, I thought I was doing a great job. Maybe I was. Or maybe I was bleeding great trails of marigold and sun and piss all over everything, and I just didn't notice. Or maybe they were all colorblind, and couldn't see yellow anyway, just knew that something was slightly off.

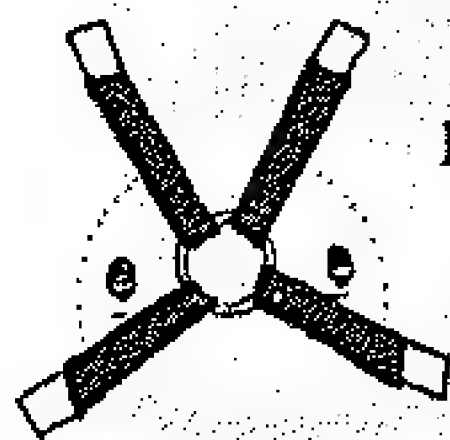
1996: I'm at the FTM conference, the big one. It's wonderful, so many cute guys. I want to fuck them all, I think, but I'm not transitioned yet, I'm just a woman with broad shoulders and facial hair as far as they're concerned. Not man enough to attract the gayboys or woman enough to interest the straight ones. I envy them. It must be nice to know what you want and even have most of it.

I'm a bit pissed off when I see the sexuality track in the program, though. "Exploring Your Heterosexual Identity"... "Exploring Your Gay Male Identity"... hey, where the hell am I supposed to go? Nothing for the damn bisexuals, although I kind of think I outgrew the bisexual label a long time ago. Where do you go when you're married to an MTF and date FTMs?

So I go to both, and I don't feel right in either. Geez. Maybe it's because of all these guys com-

plaining that they can't get laid, something I've never had problems with. Maybe they don't have it together to the extent that I thought.

Talking to some of my brothers, I figure out where all the bisexuals are — they're all trying to be gayboys as hard as they can! When pressed, they'll admit that they're technically bisexual, but they prefer a gay male identity. Why? Some don't want to be thrown out of the gay community, lose their queer standing. Some want the casual sex that a testosterone-enhanced libido whines for, and feel they can only get it with men. Some love gay male culture. Some would just rather chew off an arm than be a white heterosexual male.



(Some of the MTF lesbians I talk to are bisexual too, but many have had bad experiences with men, and women are less judgmental, supposedly... or they see the women's community, the happy lesbian/womyn/goddesses with crystals dancing, and after years of isolation and loneliness it's like the Promised Land.)

I pass at least once, though — at the dance. I strap down my tits and darken my facial hair with mascara and wear an 18th century outfit — brocade coat and vest, lace-ruffled shirt, hose and ankle boots, my long hair tied back with a ribbon. A handsome FTM, disgruntled by the preening MTFs hitting on him, makes a snide comment about transvestites and gestures at me. I realize he's read my lace and brocade as feminine, although it's technically male clothing — and me as male. I sweep over and ask him what his problem is. My voice is still female. He turns funny colors, bleeding his embarrassment. I hug him and tell him it's OK, he's right, I am everything he thought I was. And I am.

1997: I'm bumming out over my breakup with my last boy. I've been obsessing about it, dreaming about the sex we used to have. It's also my anniversary with my wife, and we go out to a restaurant together, she in her high femme best. I reach across the table and take her hand, kiss it, and in a moment of horror I realize that I have entirely forgotten how to be straight.

It's not that I don't love her, or that she's not attractive to me, it's that the romance of boy/girl, or butch/femme, or whatever, is suddenly just not there any more. I feel like I've forgotten how to play that role, forgotten my lines. Being the dashing guy to the swooning girl was something I'd been pretty good at just a few years ago. What happened? Is this, too, not a power I am allowed?

I take her home and make love to her, tenderly, considerately. I can always resort to pleasing someone;

I know I'm good at that. I don't have to be in touch with my center to do that. While I'm touching her, I suddenly see her as a beautiful boy... those sleek muscles, that angular form... and I get hard. Shit.



The next day, she's a girl again. What happened? Did my brain blip?

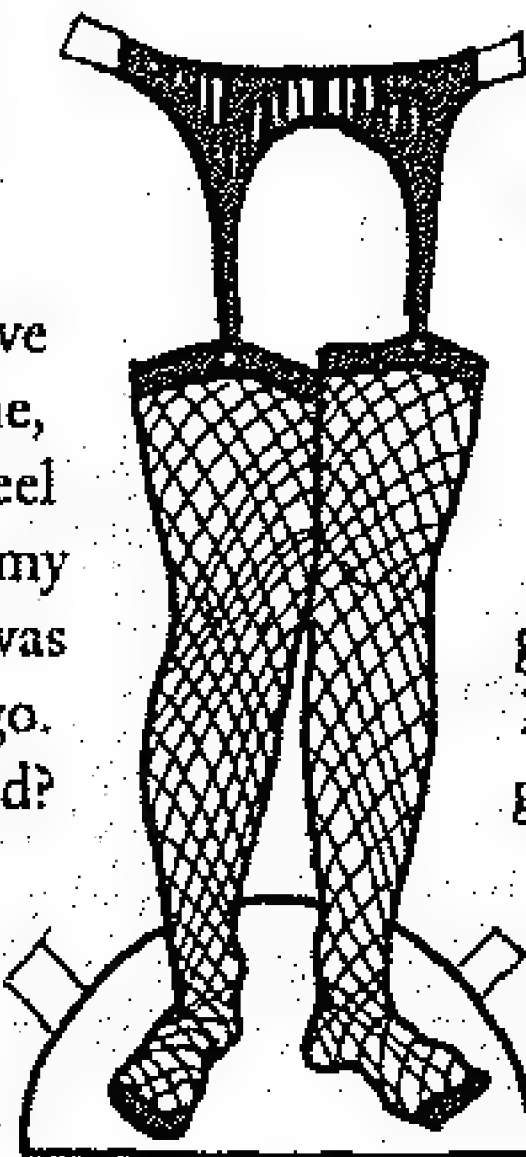
So... who you sleep with isn't about who you sleep with any more. It's about culture. Do you color your life fag, or dyke, or het, or something else? Maybe I can't understand the concept of picking the sexual preference color to go with the mental furniture. I adjust the gels on my mental spotlights and bang! that girl's a boy, that boy's a girl.

OK, but what about when you get out of bed in the morning, with the bright, cold, white sunlight showing all the dings and cracks in the façade? Can you — can I — have a relationship like that, with no mental editing, no trying to decide who plays what identity part today? More to the point, if I lived like that, would I ever get it up again?

1998: My new cock is the single best sex toy I've ever had. It's expanded with the aid of testosterone shots from a button to a prick, a perfect miniature phallus at the top of my labia. It doesn't even feel like a clitoris any more — the tip doesn't have the sensitivity that it did, but the shaft! What I thought were permanently fixed folds of foreskin have stretched out to become an elongated thing of amazing sensation. I didn't know my anatomy was capable of that!

I love it, I'm obsessed with it, I beat off three times a day. I play with putting mild clothespins and clamps on it, to experiment with the new, toughened tissue; it feels like I think a cock ring must. Why did I wait this long? I wasted 15 sexually active years where I could have been fucking like a bunny with this, my new changing, horny, sex-obsessed body.

I've also gotten more into cocksucking. I really hated sucking cock when I was a woman, I always wanted to bite it off. Sometimes keeping my jaw from clenching and mutilating someone nearly sent me into spasms. Maybe it's the fact that I have something approximating it now that makes it sexier to me, makes it into a turn-on for the first time. When my beloved goes down on me now, her mouth makes the same motion on my little cock that mine does on her bigger one. For the first time in seven years together, I love sucking her off. Of course, sooner or later she's going to have it turned inside out. I wonder what it will be like to go back to cunnilingus, assuming her new vagina will go for that.

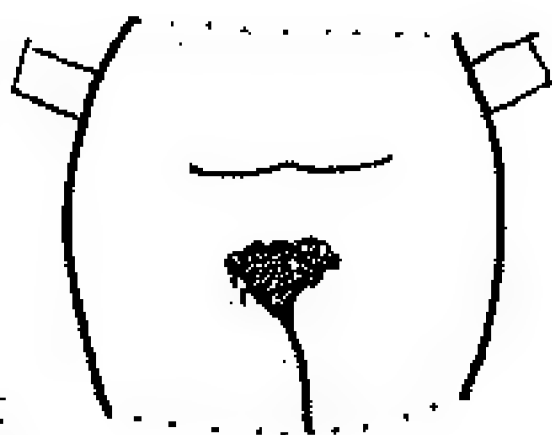


See "Bleeding Colors" (p.40)

"Bleeding Colors" (from p.39)

She's never been able to insert her cock into anyone, never been able to bring herself to do that, but she tells me shyly one night that once she has her vaginoplasty, it might be fun for her to strap on a rubber cock and fuck me. My head spins with the genderfuck of the concept. Good.

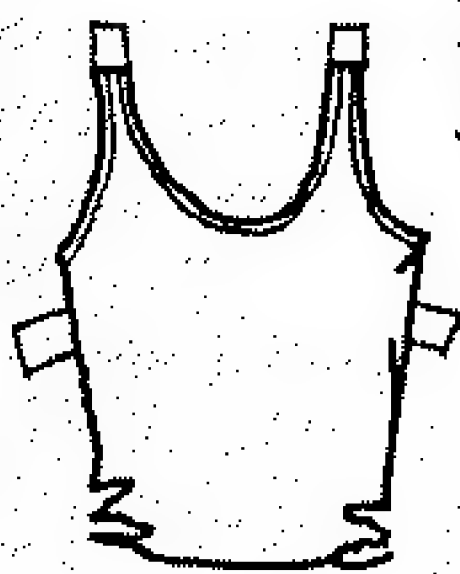
It works both ways, too. The identity/culture/preference thing, I mean. When people talk about abolishing gender, I thrill to the idea. I think it's great. If gender really doesn't matter, then you should have equal potential to be turned on to any human being, regardless of anatomy or presentation, right? If those categories don't matter, if they should be broken down, then why do you get hard and/or wet around members only of one category and not another? The nasty truth (which, believe me, I hate as much as anyone) is that they do matter — to your hard-on. Oh, but that doesn't count, right?



Wrong. It counts like nothing else. It counts so hard that the entire gender system was set up around it. Protecting the majority fetish — heterosexuality — projecting the majority's hard-on requires clear, clean differences between male and female. Even if it kills us. Can we fight against an impetus that strong and insidious? If so, how?

I'll tell you one thing: we won't do it by denying our own impervious programming, however twisted. We can't do it by pretending that we can make our crotches conform cheerfully to a genderless world.

1998, again: My new boy is a drag queen. He's an FTM like me, but he has a closet of femme drag he puts on for sex occasionally. Among other things, I'm looking forward to seeing him dolled up in lace and stockings, being girly for me.



He can keep his cock on, though. I'm not just a transfag, I don't know what I am. Pansexual, maybe. Of course, you say that word and people ask jokingly if that means you have sex with Pan, the goat-like Greek God of lust. I look them in the eye and tell them no, I have sex *as* Pan. Get over it.

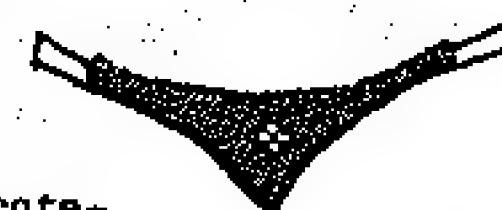
I'm a farmer and a blue-collar worker now. I can live in grunge and it doesn't matter. For the moment, it's wonderfully freeing.

My adopted brother, who's as gay they come, drops in on his way to Morocco with the Merchant Marines and tells me that I'm starting to look amazingly like my ex-husband, who

he was briefly lovers with, in the way I dress, move, walk. I grin at him. Cool. There are worse fates. After all, my wife thought my ex-husband was hot.

I don't think that getting rid of gender is the first step — I haven't seen a coherent plan for convincing society to do so yet, anyway.

I think we need *more* genders, and more freedom to move between them. Some people might roll their eyes at the idea of creating more and more categories, and sub-categories, and sub-sub-categories. More ways to oppress us, to box us in, they say! But you know what? Take a piece of paper and cut it in half. Now cut each piece in half again. Now repeat this step two hundred more times.



Got anything recognizable left? Sure, there are tiny bits and fragments, confetti, and you can bet that every one is implanted somewhere in someone, dear to their heart, close to their crotch, one of the things that spins their wheels, mows their lawn, blows their skirt up. But not enough in any one piece to oppress much of the population. It's not a vast, sweeping movement, but then you don't clean a house with a nuclear bomb anyway.

When I was a kid, my parents bought me crayons every Christmas. First the eight big ones, then the twenty-four little ones, then forty-eight, then sixty-four. No matter what number I had, by March I was pining for the next one up.



When I finally got the big can of 128 colors and realized there was nowhere to go from here, I started combining sets of different brands, since their dyes were always a little different. It was the lesson of the crayons that taught me that differences are good, that they are your wealth, that sameness is poverty.

How many colors can we be... really?

And remember the lesson on how to tell what color you really are, under the surface paint: when you combine with another, what do you make between you?

Relationships are truth in comparison. We do use them to find ourselves, and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

Raven Kaldera is an intersexual FTM Pagan minister, parent, writer of FTM erotica, and organic farmer in Massachusetts. Raven is a law unto himself.

You have been warned.

Oh man, oh Jesus Christ, I am, like, gone. Totally gone, totally doodlin' flowers an' kissy lips an' hearts on my electric bill, totally head held underwater lungs straining for air zonked out in orbit outta here gone. Crushed out, I'm crushed out like a brittle flower pressed in the Encyclopedia Britannica, L: Love through Lust. I'm, like, adolescent does she like me or like me like me puppydog smitten an' can you find out if she likes me likes me or just likes me an' can you find out in gym class on the sly? An' my head swirls from drinkin' beer an' watchin' a kiss-kiss-he-loves-me-he-loves-me-not-heart-jerkin' movie an' I rewind for the best parts an' I'm dancin' with the curtains an' tapestry an' pretendin' it's you an' whisperin' your name an' beggin' to myself that you kissed me when I saw you earlier today, an' we talked, and I was dazzled — blown away with your strength an' intelligence an' wit an' power — personal power — Gawddess, your face your face your beautiful....! An' I begged myself just to listen an' inhale your thoughts, your conviction, your force an' ideological passion. I was scared I guess that you'd see my waist beggin' for your arms, an' the longing an' the need an' devout little-girl admiration, an' I opened my mouth. I opened it, an' bludgeoned yer hummingbird strong flower smooth thoughts with coarse, show-off opinion. Gawdess, why did I do it? Stupid, stupid idiot.

CRUSHED

I bet you don't know — it's been five years. Five years since I dated, an' longer since I been so darn dizzy about someone. Since I been so crushed out an' infatuated an' in love an' wanted... well, wanted someone more than for a second's passin' lust for a stranger. An' in these five years, I tried... I mean, I tried really hard, an' I've sat naked in a dark room on a crisp white towel, an' listened to the whispers and smelled the salt of sex. An' I sat with my arms pullin' my knees to my chest, an' people sat by me an' smiled an' I probably scowled or ignored them. An' one man... he kneeled before another, an' opened his mouth an' his eyes fluttered beneath his lids an' they were beautiful, like stone... stone statues warmed by the sun. An' I envied... I envied, I guess, their ease of desire. Problem-solution-bang! Like that — simple. An' secure, they were secure 'cause they knew. They wanted what they wanted, they were who they are. Period. Easy. An' I wished an' cried an' hoped I knew what I wanted, and it was just problem-solution-bang sex, so easy, so negotiable. An' I'd know who I was an' that would be that.

An' tonight, I'm in my mind, an' fabric swings loose from my hips as you push me softly. You turn me gently, your hands firm and protective on my waist, guiding me backward through a maze of bittersweet jazz. I am smaller in my mind, an' I close my eyes an' rest my head on your shoulder, an' you hold me, an' your tie falls on a smart line down between your lapels, barely interrupted by the slight rise of your breasts an' I sink into you an' feel safe, safe like at home under a quilt, warm, an' you kiss my hair. "Please kiss me," I write in one of the hearts I'm doodling as I watch my movie, an' I picture us dancing with grace neither possess. I write your name in a heart, and mine.... a change of suffix all I need. All I need tonight to make real the funny truth I found under a mass of clutter I constructed. Constructed from a fearful stock of half-examined clues and half-believed lies. The starched, diagnostic word made to describe me is set down outside my head. Biological fact doesn't reach my core, but for the yellowed crust it leaves over my heart. An' I close my eyes... "Please kiss me," I think, an' you do kiss me... five years since I've been kissed or wanted to be. An' now, clearing clutter, I open shades inside an' light comes in an' your lips brush my mouth an' I sigh, alone in my apartment, beer foam lining an empty glass.

by Christine Smith



Christine is a bisexual (for lack of a better term) MTF TS who has lived in the San Francisco Bay Area for almost a year. She is 28, a writer, an artist, and a cartoonist.

Temptations of the Sweet

by Mari Ness
illustration by Juba Kalamka

It was too much, this endless dreaming, this agonizing passion — far too much. She woke in the early morning, still dreaming: dreaming of the strength, the solidness, the gleaming tan body, the treasures it guarded, the hidden mysteries it kept. Mysteries she knew she could unleash with a touch.

No other lover had been like this, not one. Oh, Sam, of course, had known every fold, every muscle in her back, almost as well as he knew the interior of his beloved sports car, and had devoted almost as much skill to her as he had to it. And Dorothy — how could she forget Dorothy, who had had a mouth sweeter than wine and a tongue faster than a ruby-throated hummingbird's.

And Ellen and Sarah, who together had given her one extraordinary night of wine, oceans, and Crackerjack boxes. The words "baseball" and "popcorn" still made her flush.

And Meredith, who may have lacked everything in emotional stability, witty conversation, taste, and sensual skills — but had hair. Hair, spun of pure soft silk, wavy, easy to fall into and drown, hair that she knew she would never see again.

And Tony, who had emotional stability to spare, and stamina to match, and the ability to catch every other word in a conversation. Ah, Tony.

And Edith. But one couldn't really describe Edith.

None of them — none — matched the temptation that awaited her. She eyed the door longingly.

Think of Edith, she thought desperately. Think of anything else.

Think of Edith.

She gave a slight gasp, thinking of Edith; automatically, her hand went down to assuage the growing heat there. Beside her, David stirred. The longing was becoming overpowering; she could feel her breath quickening. Across her mind, Edith's hands danced, played with her emotions a moment, then left, fleeing before the desire beyond the door. Her hand absently followed the movements of the imaginary Edith and then stopped. It was pointless; that would never assuage her longing tonight.

She needed more, much more.

She looked at David with fondness and trepidation. Dared she? Could she? What would he think if she went to this lover beyond the door?

She knew the answer already, knew how his eyes would gleam slightly, how he would insist on knowing every detail. He would attempt to be modern, to be understanding. "Tell me everything," he would say, while behind his eyes she would see the hurt, the anguish and the pain he was never very good at concealing.

Perhaps she could have David join in and share the pleasure of this forbidden love with him? But as she thought it, she shook her head slightly.

David would never agree. He would think it unhealthy, even slightly dangerous. He would point out the chances of addiction and lust. He was so careful, always, in everything, from sex to food to work to life; she loved that control, but right now she could have killed him for it.

The door beckoned.

No. She was stronger than this. She was.

She thought again of all her lovers, thought of David lying beside her, thought of Edith, ah, Edith, and —

The door beckoned.

Outside, the city streets moaned their quiet howling, of distant sirens and softly barking dogs, the eerie quiet of an almost sleeping city.

Somewhere, somebody was getting fucked.

She moaned again. The door beckoned.

She gave David a last, agonized look, then threw off the covers, grabbing her robe from where it lay, carelessly tossed on the floor. She put it on and trotted softly to the door, pulling it open slowly, carefully, cringing at the slight squeak. She gave David another quick look, but he slumbered on, and with a slight, relieved smile, she darted through the door.

Another few steps — she gulped, shut her eyes, and slowly, tenderly caressed the tan being in front of her, and sighed when she felt the answering hum. No, no other lover had been this strong, this solid.

Her caress turned into an urgent pull, an urgent need to open the doors, to taste every secret this treasure box contained.

Her hands urgently explored, and she moaned again when she felt her fingers touch its hidden treasure, the golden box concealed there, behind the humming strength. She fingered the box gently, biting her lip to keep from moaning again, and tugged at one of the treasures there.

Slowly, she bent her lip and tongue to it, and sighed at the taste.

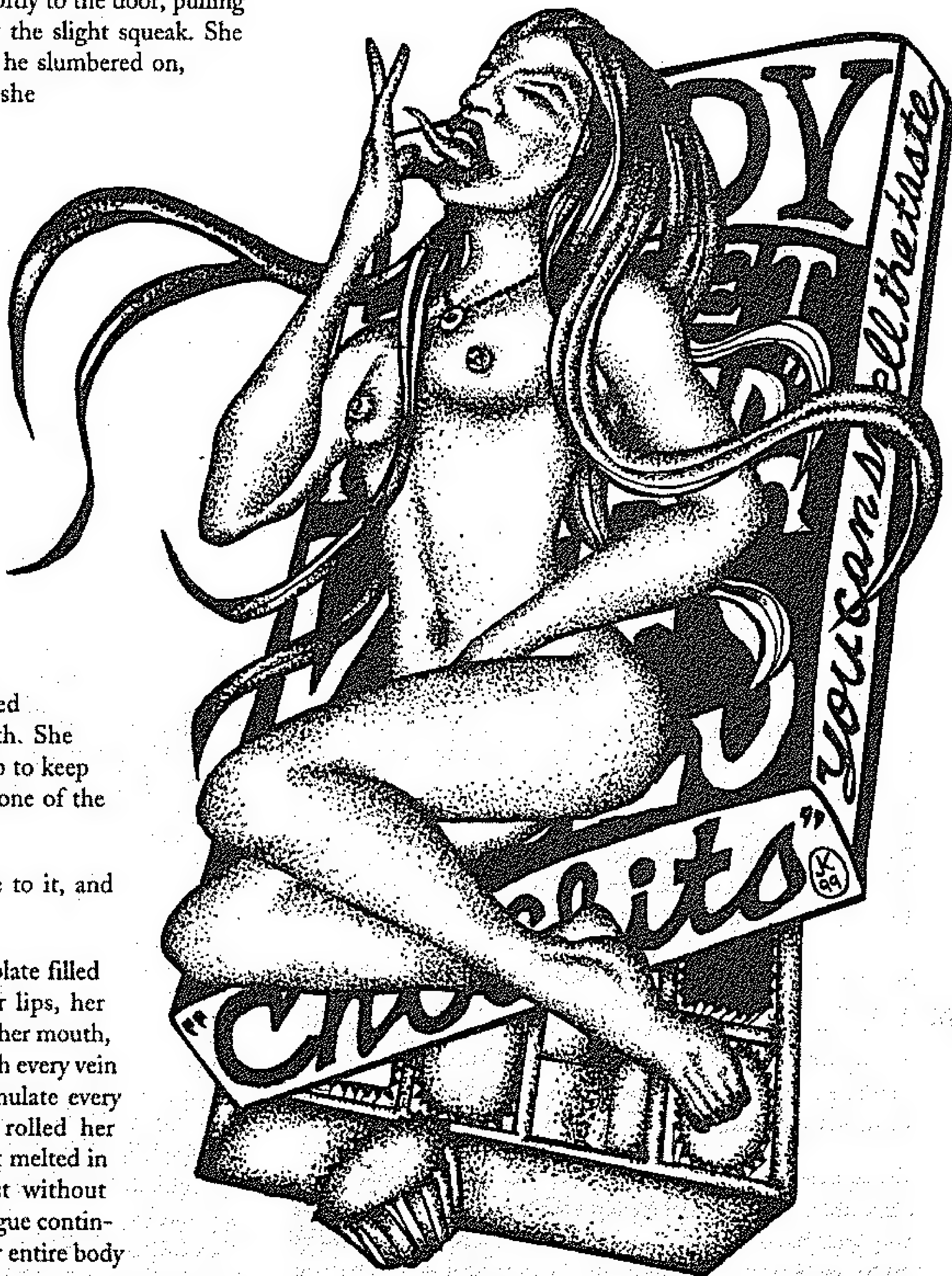
Slowly, the richness of Godiva chocolate filled her mouth, coating her tongue, her lips, her throat. She moaned as the taste filled her mouth, sending its sweetness coursing through every vein of her body, feeling its richness stimulate every pleasure center in her brain. She rolled her tongue along the truffle carefully as it melted in the heat of her mouth, and almost without thinking, grabbed another, as her tongue continued its endless chocolate dance, as her entire body

responded to the rush, as she leaned against the refrigerator door, sighing deeply, body and mind nearly spent.

God, why could her other lovers not be like this, simple, and rich, readily kept behind closed doors except when temptation called?

But she could not answer that question now. The refrigerator was calling, and she was its slave.

Mari Ness worships chocolate, words, and music, in no particular order. She can be e-mailed at Mari_Ness@hotmail.com.



THE SHOW'S NOT OVER

by Dan Mullen

art by Julia Keel

Our Heroes:

Vic: the hunky FTM security guard, is volunteering for the Queer Central benefit and waiting for...

Barbara: janitor by night, poet by day, who is performing poetry at the benefit and thinking about the object of her love...

Erika: who is oblivious to Barbara's desire and happy to be in the spotlight with her date...

Ray: a journalist who is rapidly becoming part of the benefit he's covering, along with Erika and her ex-girlfriend...

Jane: decidedly not over Erika, who has decided to vent some more to her ex-girlfriend...

Valerie: Ray's editor at Queer Central and Vic's former lover, who is about to get an earful of gossip.

Erika watched in horror as the act stumbled and Ray stayed down under the boot of the Scottish guitarist. *Ray hasn't gotten up yet. Is he okay?*

"Dammit!" someone said near her, and she noticed someone fighting their way through the crowd to her side. *Why do I have a really bad feeling, like I know that voice... oh no!*

It was Jane, bent on a course of destruction, pushing two or three big leather-bears out of her way and heading toward Erika like a vengeful missile.

"That's it! Bow before the master Scotsman and his weapon! I've got a two-hander here," Ian MacMacManus declared broadly, brandishing his oversized strap-on to the crowd's cheers.

Vic watched the scene on stage with a little amusement and a bit of worry. It looked like Ian and Ray were handling the crowd fine, although the slip-up did seem to create a problem. Ian was obviously improvising to cover for.... Vic looked at Ray's face, and while admiring it, realized that a little pain was registered there. *Ray must have hurt himself. I thought that fall looked a little too genuine. Time to step in.*

Jumping out from behind the curtain, Vic yelled, "I can take it all!"

"Prrrove it, burly man!" Ian roared, and as he turned away from the crowd, winked gratefully at Vic. "This bi-boy canna handle the likes of Excalibur... but you'll do! Down on yer knees and go down, me lad!"

Vic obediently knelt before the strap-on, feigned a little hesitation for the crowd, and let Ian's big guitarist's hand yank his head into position. *If this is what I have to do to cover, I should do it more often,* he thought, working the big pastel dildo down his

throat to a chord progression from the band, Ian's groan, and a rising cheer from the drunken crowds.

Out of the corner of his eye Vic could see Ray crawling offstage carefully. *I hope he's okay; I'd rather be sucking on him than Ian's mint-flavored monster. We need to talk... and hopefully more...*

"So what, women aren't good enough for you any more? Or do you have to have one of each?" Jane hissed, low enough to carry under the crowd noise and whatever Scottish drivel the guitarist was still bellowing.

"Jane, this isn't the time or place for us to fight," Erika pleaded.

"Of course not. Between your girl at the office and the boy here you have no time at all. Fine!" Jane screeched, dashing away a histrionic tear, and stomped off toward the stairs.

Erika sighed. *Jeez, she's drunk. I really didn't need that on top of everything else. Where's Ray?* She stopped to stare for a moment as Vic deep-throated the dildo. *Wow, he's pretty good. Oh, there's Ray, offstage. I'd better fight my way over there and see if he's okay... And I hope Jane's okay. I don't want to deal with her manipulation and screaming fits and emotional abuse... but I do still kind of care about her. I hope she's calling a cab.*

Valerie was relaxing upstairs in the "schmoozing lounge." This was her personal slice of relaxation for a few days of good work. She had hooked up her newest reporter with one her favorite ex-girlfriends (if that was really the right term to use... she still thought of Vickie as her ex-girlfriend, but Vic just wasn't a girl any more). And she'd gotten Ray into one of the hottest benefits for gossip. Hopefully he'd turn up a juicy tidbit or two, but they still had to brainstorm a name for the columnist.

But she didn't want to think about work; she wanted to enjoy herself.

The Goddess intervened, in the form of an ex-girlfriend.

"Val? Oh my god, I'm having the worst night!" Jane's voice was cracking a bit as she staggered into the table.

"Honey, what's wrong? Another girl leave you at the CoCo Club for some lipstick baby dyke?" Valerie tried to keep the comment light, but knew that Jane was a little bit more upset than usual.

"No. If it was just that I'd get over it. It's my ex-girlfriend Erika." Jane sniffled a bit and then continued, "It's not just that she's dating again so soon, but that's she's dating a man! And I'm pretty sure she's dating a woman too. She's just being a hussy all over the place. She wonders why I get so jealous? Maybe it's because she can't commit!"

"Jane, why don't you calm down. It might just be you can't handle polyamory. I know you and I have talked this issue to death already." Valerie winced at remembering some of the conversations about this at the end of their relationship. "Why don't you tell me what happened and where you saw her and get it all out of your system?" Valerie knew this was the best way to get Jane calm.

"Well, I was downstairs watching the band, and I saw Erika there with this guy..."

As Valerie listened her eyes started to widen. Jane wasn't describing just a random boy... she was describing Ray! *I hooked him up with Vic! What's he doing dating women?* "And you're saying he was on the stage?" she demanded.

That's no way to get gossip! I'll have a talk with him at work on Monday, that's for damn sure.

Erika shoved her way through the masses to the side of the stage where she'd seen Ray crawl off. The bouncer fortunately recognized her and let her past the curtains.

Ray was propped against a couple of prop crates. Erika ran to his side. "Are you all right? Do you need a doctor?"

Ray looked rueful, and let Erika help him sit up a little better. "I think I'm okay. My back went out, but I'll be able to walk home soon. And my head is sore from having a combat boot on it. But I think the most injured part is my pride," he tried to laugh.

"Pride isn't covered by insurance, but heals easier. Anyway, you were cute even in your clumsiness." She kissed him gently on the cheek, hoping this minor fiasco wouldn't turn into a major funk for him.

"Thanks. Unfortunately cute doesn't engender getting gossip. I need to be sparkling," Ray sighed, and groaned as he tried to sit up more. *I don't feel sparkling. I feel pretty shagged. And the night's only at the intermission...*

Erika straightened his hair as best she could. "You did fine. Pull yourself together, and you'll be sparkling again. I think so, and I'll bet Vic does too."

Oh my god! Does she know what happened between me and Vic?

Ray's mind flashed through the possibilities. *I need to talk with her, tonight.* "Um... I don't think so. It might just be good for us to leave. I can tell Valerie that I threw my back out, and maybe I can get Vic to give me some dirt and some phone numbers for follow-up interviews..."

"Fine by me," Erika agreed. "Let's call a cab and get out of here. I just had a run-in with my ex while you were under the boot, and my party mood's kind of gone."

Barbara had been trying to find some quiet time in the backstage bathroom. She had butterflies — no, make it octopuses — in her stomach. She'd done a few readings, but never erotica. She straightened her hair and her dress one last time and stepped out. The distant thunder of that weird Scottish punk comedy band was still droning; Barbara'd be on after Vic emceed them past the intermission and the call for donations. Following a band was going to be really rough...

She walked up the side of the backstage area and saw Erika sitting there with Ray, and her octopuses writhed. *And there's the woman I wrote half this erotica for. With a man.*

Erika saw her. "Barbara! Wow, you look great! Are you actually performing tonight?"

See "Dear Jane" (p.46)

Dear Jane (from p.45)

"I, yeah, I'm doing a reading. Vic needed a last-minute replacement," Barbara stuttered self-consciously.

"Well, you'll do fine. You can't do any worse than I did," Ray said from where he was still propped on the boxes.

"You were onstage?" Barbara demanded in confusion.

"I threw my back out slipping in a beer puddle when I was supposed to be the plant for the McMacManuses," Ray grinned weakly. "Vic had to go down... I mean, go in... well, both, really, and cover for me."

Barbara managed to smile a little. "I'm sorry to hear that. But you're right. I can't do any worse than that. I hope. Um, were you leaving?" she asked, noticing Erika's armful of coats.

Erika looked at Ray. "I was just about to call a cab. But... Ray, do you mind staying a little longer? I'd really like to hear Barbara read."

Barbara's heart flared like a Roman candle.

Ray grinned. "Sure. We can just flag a cab on Valencia — it won't take long."

Erika smiled at Barbara, and Barbara thought she might faint.

From on the stage, Vic had been reading the please-give spiel off to the crowds, who had calmed down a little; now his microphoned voice was saying "Our next act..."

"Oh, god, that's me," Barbara realized, clutching her papers nervously.

Erika gave her a quick, impulsive hug. "Break a leg! You'll do great, I'm sure." And Erika shoved her up the stairs as Vic was announcing her name.

Vic smiled at Barbara as they crossed paths on the stage. *God, I hope nobody else falls in the beer. I can't exactly bring a mop out between acts... ah, why the hell not?* he realized. *That puddle's a safety hazard if I ever saw one.* As he went offstage, he saw the spark in the speakers, and groaned.

Barbara stepped up to the microphone and took a deep breath...

And there was a nasty zapping sound, and the spotlight, and all the lights in the place, went dark.

Dan Mullen is a business manager, not a writer, works for two non-profits, has two lovers, and hopes to see two plot twists in the next installment.

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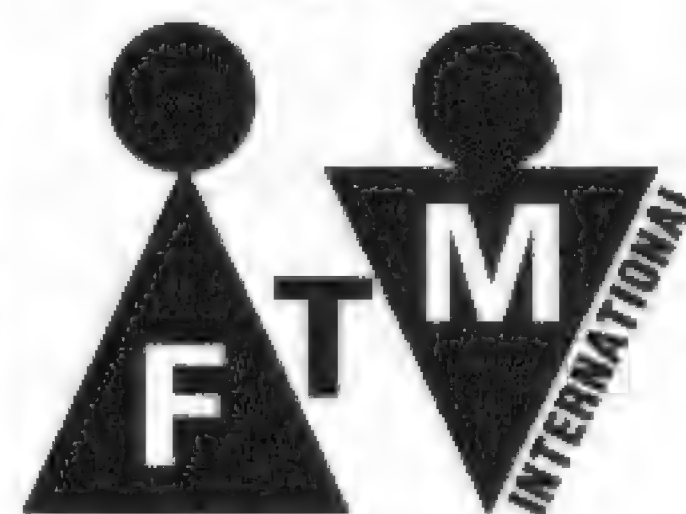
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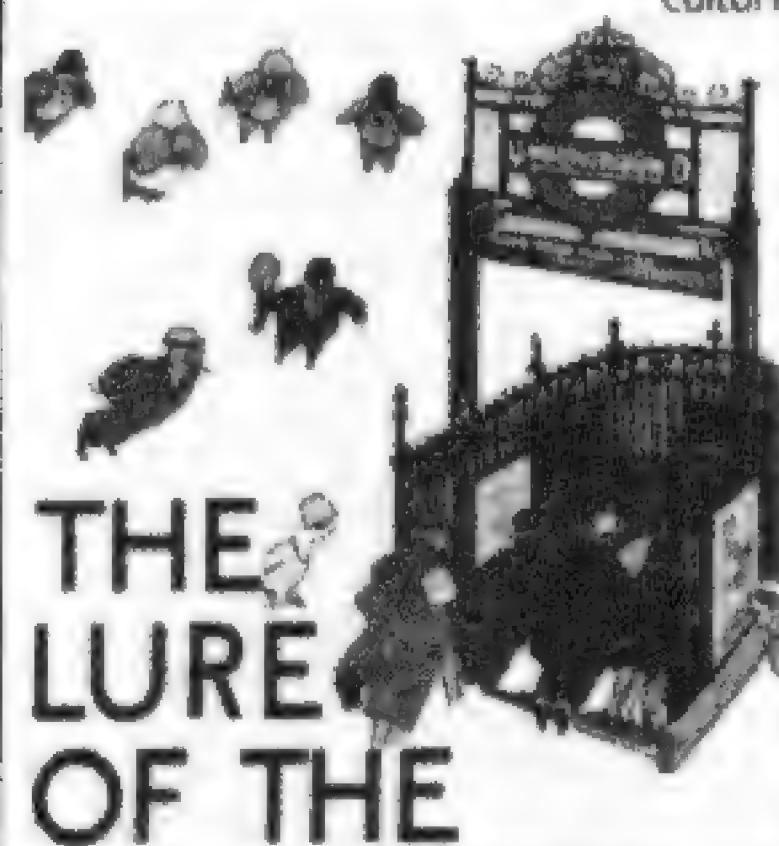
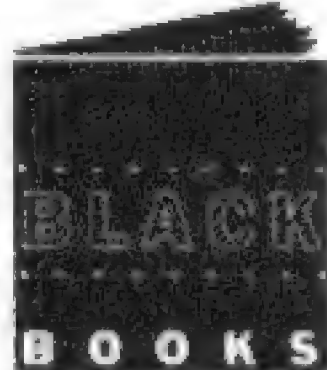
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What Your Mother Never Told You

Advice from Uncle Bill & Auntie Andrea

Dear Auntie Andrea:

What is "intercrural sex"?

— Confused

Dear Confused:

And all this time bisexuals have been saying that we aren't confused? Now I'm confused, too!

Seriously, I had never even heard the term "intercrural sex" before being asked this question. *Webster's Dictionary* defines the word "crural" as meaning "of the leg or thigh." Add the prefix "inter" and the result is "sex between the legs or thighs."

I have heard anecdotally from several different people that ancient Greek men participated in a form of this, in which one man would stand with his thighs pressed together, while the other man achieved sexual pleasure by rubbing his penis in between the thighs of the quasi-receptive partner. I have yet to find a solid literary reference for the use of the term "intercrural sex" for this; however,

it certainly would fit the definition. I suppose the female equivalent would be knee-rides, which would also fit the literal definition.

After I asked around a bit, I found that everyone surveyed agreed that this particular form of sex should have a much shorter name, in any case.

— Auntie Andrea

[Note to readers: This article originally appeared in issue #11. Since the topic is of perennial (not to mention perianal!) interest, I've updated it for you. — Uncle Bill]

Dear Uncle Bill:

I have a question about anal sex — sometimes, but not always, after getting fucked up the ass, my insides feel all rearranged, and I may even feel nauseous the next day. More than that, I sometimes feel "not right" that is partly psychological and partly physical — I love getting fucked, and it's happened more than twice, so I'm assuming that my feelings and the act of getting fucked are connected. Is this common — are there ways to avoid it aside from not getting fucked (I'm not willing to do that)? Maybe I'm too tense, maybe the cocks and dildos are too long, or maybe I'm

just weird. I dunno — help me out, Uncle Bill. It's happened both with women with strap-ons and with men with live cocks.

— Allen

Dear Allen:

You're not weird. What you're describing is pretty common, actually. Often, physical discomfort is due to not feeling completely relaxed at the time of intercourse. Most people find that they prefer certain positions when being anally penetrated. It's important that the penis, dildo, or other object enters and moves at a comfortable angle; otherwise, it runs into the rectal wall, which can cause discomfort, not to mention tearing and bleeding. Squatting-on-top is often the easiest position for fuckees since it offers the greatest amount of control. Generally, the more comfortable you are at the time of intercourse, the less queasiness you will feel the next day.

It's important to take things slowly, as it were. In fact, many folks need to practice self-stimulation before attempting partnered anal sex. There is no reason that anal sex should hurt the receptive partner. You wouldn't start a physical workout without warming up and stretching your muscles; likewise, you may experience less discomfort if you ease into getting fucked. Yet guys, especially, are raised to believe that they



Auntie Andrea, in her own words, is "a pervy, horny bisexual chick who is having way too much fun living in San Francisco. In her spare time, she collects labels."

Uncle Bill (a.k.a Bill Brent) edits and publishes two sex-oriented publications. *Black Sheets* is a bi-oriented zine for kinky, queer, intelligent, and irreverent folk. *The Black Book* is an illustrated resource guide for the erotic explorer. Both are available at the ATM order line, (800) 818-8823.

should "tough it out" and not complain when they feel pain. This is nonsense. Honesty and communication are essential ingredients in negotiating successful anal intercourse (not to mention life in general!). Don't allow yourself to be penetrated longer or faster than feels comfortable. It's important to pace yourself! Some people find it essential to take frequent breaks. And, like the U2 song goes, some days are better than others.

All the stuff you've heard about performance anxiety applies here, too — an anxious sphincter does not want to be penetrated! Try to bring a mental list of some alternative things you can do if the anal part of your sex just isn't working. Often, just *knowing* that you have options is enough to relax and allow pleasurable anal penetration. A good partner will be patient and allow you to adjust gradually to the fullness. Performance anxiety cuts both ways, too — many guys have trouble staying hard, especially in the condom-clad era. You may even want a dildo or two on hand as backup! Patience is important for *both* partners.

The psychological discomfort you feel could be "morning-after" guilt. Most of us are taught to feel shame regarding our buttocks. In our culture, men are not "supposed" to be receptive, and men and women alike are raised to view anal penetration as unnatural. We raise children to believe that bodily waste is "filthy." True, the anus and the rectum are the passageway for feces. Yet feces are not normally stored in the rectum except when the body is preparing for a bowel movement, and a healthy person eating enough fiber should have fairly firm stools that do not linger. If you like, there are various devices (described in the books below) you can use to rinse the rectal passageway before getting fucked; it's best to do this a couple of hours before penetration, so that the rectal walls can re-line themselves with

the body's natural lubricant. But in any case, it's a bad idea to get fucked on a full stomach. This can definitely cause cramping and other problems. Ongoing discomfort could be a sign of hemorrhoids, anal fissures, or other difficulties that require medical attention.

You may wish to check out the following books: *Anal Pleasure & Health* by Jack Morin (Down There Press, 800-289-8423; ISBN 0-940208-20-2). Chock full of good ideas about making anal play more comfortable and safe. I also recommend Tristan Taormino's *The Ultimate Guide to Anal Sex for Women* (Cleis Press, 800-780-2279; ISBN 1-57344-028-0). Although directed at a female audience, most of the material in the book is applicable to men. (Cleis has me at work on the companion book for men; it should be available in Spring 2000.)



I hope this helps, and if any readers have thoughts or suggestions regarding anal sex, by all means send 'em in!

— Uncle Bill

What your mother probably never told you was that Uncle Bill & Auntie Andrea are available to answer all your questions on sex, love, relationships, et cetera. Send them c/o *Anything That Moves*, 2261 Market St., #496, San Francisco, CA 94114-1600, or email advice@anythingthatmoves.com. We'll only use your initials or a pen name, so don't worry, your mother won't find out...

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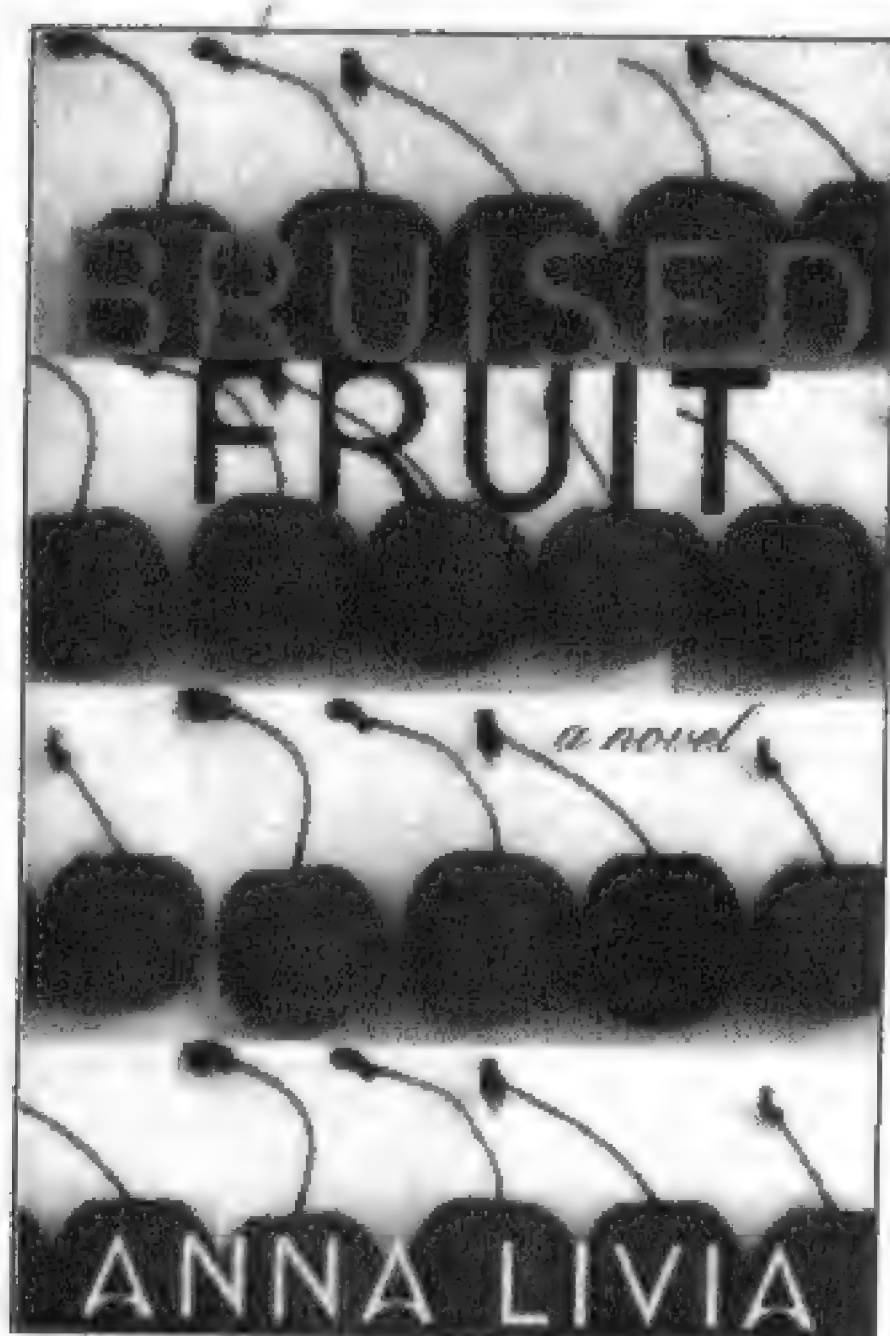
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REVIEWS



Bruised Fruit: A Novel

by Anna Livia
(Firebrand Books, 1999)
ISBN 1563411067
\$13.95

reviewed by
Melissa White

Author Anna Livia takes the reader on quite a ride through the pages of *Bruised Fruit*, a new novel from Firebrand Books. A magical spell cast by a little girl with a sheep's afterbirth

influences the course of events from the first chapter to the last. The "long glistening tube of muscle and blood" that she slips into her dysfunctional family's mutton and mushroom stew has the power to end bad things and even transform them into good, with surprising results.

Livia serves up not one but three *bona fide* bisexual characters for our delectation. Following a childhood of incestuous abuse, Patti Asquith, blonde bombshell, is plagued by a little sex-related homicide habit. Ella Weissman, middle-aged therapist, feels trapped in a five-year romantic hiatus. And Sydney, hermaphrodite and art dealer, struggles under the pain of continual gender prejudice and pines after a woman who wants only friendship. By the end of the book, all of them find better ways to meet their frustrated sexual and emotional needs — and new lovers.

The novel opens with two disconnected story lines running parallel and gradually moving toward integration. We meet Patti as a pretty nine-year-old who avoids encounters with daddy by roaming the neighborhood with her closest friend, the ill-fated pit bull, Lucky. Caroline Shields, another major character, lives in London, deep in abusive partnership with her lover, Amanda Tate.

Patti and Caroline are unhappy and isolated, and their stories remain separate until they begin taking action to change their lives. Patti grows up, reaches for independence and experiments with new jobs, including an amusing stint as a relative for hire. During one temp assignment she meets Takehiro Yamamoto, a former gangster from Japan who serves as her guardian angel. On her

path of healing, Caroline learns how to make love with fresh produce, decks Amanda, and shortly thereafter changes continents. Both Patti and Caroline start over in the San Francisco Bay Area, where they find community with others who have been tumbled too roughly by life and have bruises to show.

Although most of the main characters struggle with histories of severe abuse, in *Bruised Fruit* their lives are woven together and transformed into a lighthearted but not quite convincing crime thriller. More than a couple of over-privileged straight white males die along the way, as if their deaths were the price that must be paid for other characters to enjoy a happy ending. Although the novel is delightful to read, and Sydney in particular is a compelling, unique character, I felt dissatisfied with the easy resolution.

FAT!SO?: BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE FOR YOUR SIZE

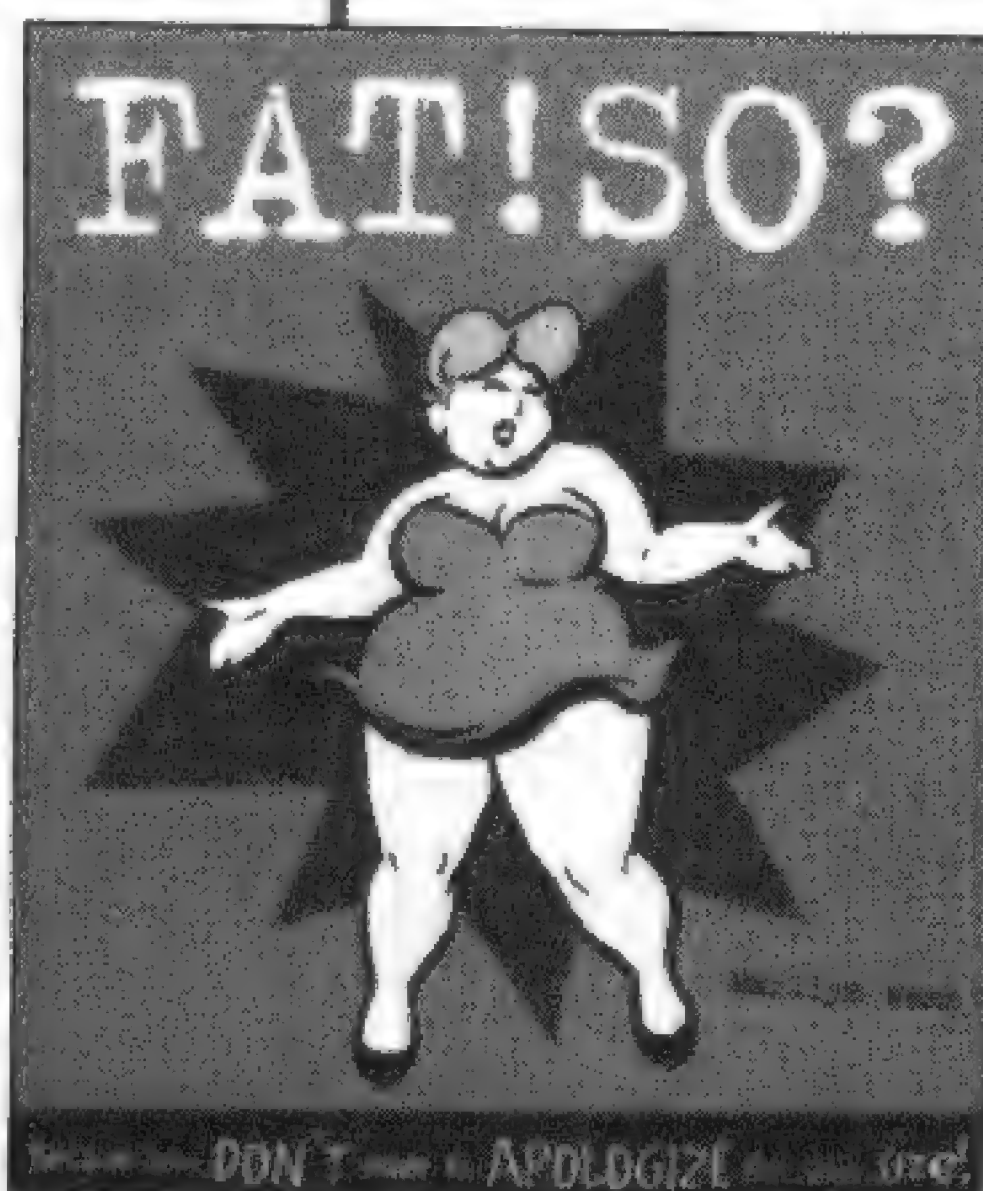
by Marilyn Wann
(Ten Speed Press, 1998)
ISBN 0898159954 \$12.95

reviewed by Hanne Blank

Even if I weren't a contributor to it, and even if Marilyn weren't one of the coolest women I know, I'd still be delirious about this book. Marilyn Wann's *Fat!So?: Because You Don't Have To Apologize For Your Size* is a long-overdue call to chubby arms — and bellies, thighs, butts, and double chins.

Unlike many of the other wonderful books in the growing literature on size acceptance, *Fat!So?* never falls prey to the apologetic tone or victim-itis that sometimes plague even the best and brightest examples of fat-positive writing. Instead, what you find here is militant, vibrant, funny, unavoidably accurate writing on the socially difficult and emotionally volatile topic of fat.

Liberally peppered with thought-provoking photos and jazzy drawings — including a sexy flip-book (check the upper right hand corners of the pages) featuring the juicy cover-babe doing a striptease — Wann's book takes an unrestrained, honest look at the



realities of fat. Debunking myth after myth, Wann cites the medical literature with the same facility with which she draws from the collective wisdom of her enormous circle of fat friends and fans. Frankly, I can't decide which I like better: the fact that this book brings together so many nuggets of evidence (culled from the pages of respected medical journals like *The International Journal of Obesity*) that diets don't work, or the flabulous lists of snappy comebacks to bigoted remarks. With *Fat! So?*, you'll never again be at a loss for words — icy or erudite — when your doctor, mother, boss, or someone on the street needles you about your weight!

Being fat, Wann argues, is not so different from being queer or bald, short or green-eyed, coming from a particular racial background, or being left-handed. Fat is just another one of the things that people are. That said, I have to add that from my perspective, being fat is not unlike being bisexual: it's not invisible the way bisexuality (usually) is, but it is something about which everyone assumes "something can or should be done." When it seems that everyone has a stake in asking you to change, being fat, like being bi, often means you just don't — literally in some cases — fit in. Read this book. Its humanity, honesty, and warm humor guarantee you'll fit in just fine... even if you're skinny.

Johanne Blank edits Zaftig!: Sex For The Well Rounded, an erotica 'zine. Individual issues are \$7. Write to Zaftig!, 54 Boynton Street, First Floor, Boston, MA 02130, or email zaftig@xensei.com.

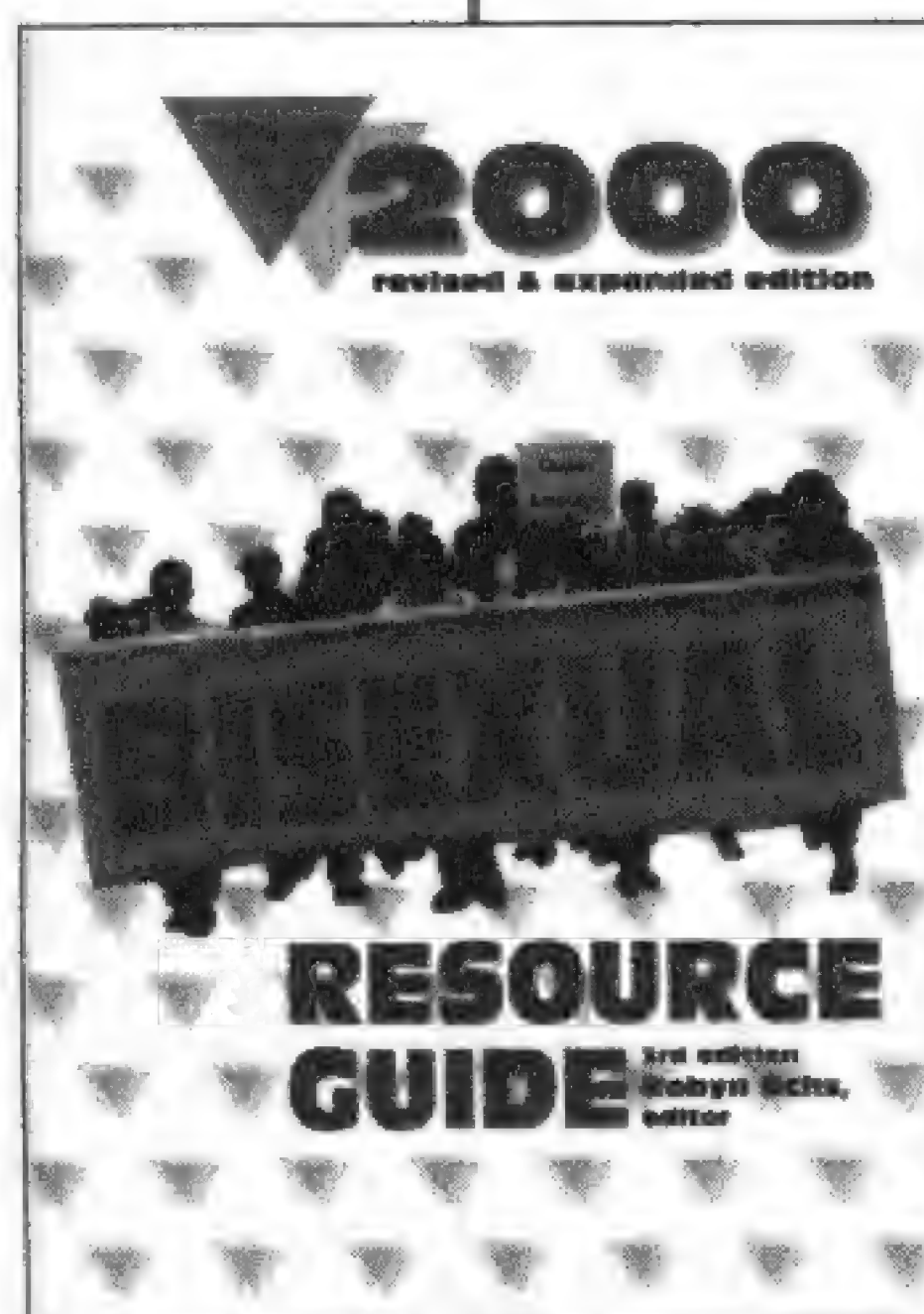
BISEXUAL RESOURCE GUIDE 2000

edited by Robyn Ochs
(Bisexual Resource Center, 1999; \$13.95)

reviewed by Kevin McCulloch

Robyn Ochs and the good folks at Boston's Bisexual Resource Center are back with the third edition of their tremendous *Bisexual Resource Guide*. Expanded and revised just in time for the new millennium, the *Guide* keeps getting fatter, juicier, more diverse, and more exciting.

Besides nearly 200 pages of contact information for bisexual and bi-friendly groups in over 50 countries, the *Guide* includes articles on the definition of bisexuality, how to start a bi support group, how to find bisexual characters in literature and film, safer sex, and how to "get bi on the Internet." Whether you're looking for a bisexual disco in Berlin, a resource center in Zimbabwe, or kindred spirits in southern Mississippi, the indispensable *Bisexual Resource Guide* is the book for you.



FILM: THE HAUNTING

directed by Jan De Bont
DreamWorks SKG

reviewed by Kai MacTane

Finally, along comes a movie in which even the mainstream press have noticed the presence of a bisexual character, and yet it's no cause for celebration. *The Haunting* stars Catherine Zeta-Jones as Theo, an unapologetic bisexual woman, but it won't do our cause any help.

First, the standard review: *The Haunting*, directed by Jan De Bont (*Speed*, *Speed 2: Cruise Control* and *Twister* — not a very encouraging résumé), is yet another version of Shirley Jackson's 1959 novel *The Haunting of Hill House*. While the 1963 movie of the same name did a wonderful job of bringing Jackson's subtle and complex psychological thriller to the screen, there's nothing subtle or complex about this movie. The script alternates between boring the living daylights out of the audience and trying to spook them with phony startling noises (such as the altogether-too-loud popping of a log in a fireplace).

The actors are mostly given little to work with, except Lili Taylor, in the lead role as Eleanor "Nell" Vance — she is given altogether too much to work with, much of it self-contradictory and insipid. By the end of the movie, she is reduced to yelling "Stop it! Let them go!" at the ghosts and declaring *ad nauseam* that she "has to save the children". The fact that

the children in question have been dead for more than a century could have put an eerie new spin on right-to-life rhetoric under other circumstances, but in the hands of screenwriter David Self, the repetition is simply tiresome.

Liam Neeson plays Dr. David Marrow, a psychologist researching fear, who has brought the other victims to Hill House under the guise of a study of insomnia and sleep disorders. Owen Wilson rounds out the major cast as Luke Sanderson, a shallow, feckless and not-very-bright fellow-participant in the insomnia/fear study. The special effects are rendered very well, but they can't save the movie from its own muddled plot — and they're over-the-top for what should be a psychological thriller. When bones erupt in the main hall of the house, it just seems gauche. Altogether, this movie has nothing going for it but the sets; in every other arena, the 1963 original has it beat.

As for the bisexual content...

See "The Haunting" (p.52)

REVIEWS

"The Haunting" (from p.51)

Theo arrives on-screen about 20 minutes into the movie, and within three minutes, she's declared very matter-of-factly that she has a boyfriend and a girlfriend. It's never mentioned whether they know about each other, but as a New York City artist, it wouldn't be a stretch to assume Theo's polyamorous as well as openly and unabashedly bi.

In Hollywood's twisted sense of morality, of course, this translates to "slut". Theo starts flirting with Nell almost immediately after arriving, referring to her as "blank canvas" and later bringing her a gorgeous robe (symbolically, the robe is a deep red color). She dresses the part as well, of course, slinking through the movie in low-cut tops, tight sweaters, scoop-backed dresses and miniskirts. The camera highlights this fact by lingering over her chest in frequent close-ups early in her screen time.

Luke and Nell even mention her revealing wardrobe at one point, and in the beginning of the movie, when Dr. Marrow and his assistant are going over the psych profiles of the participants, there is a mention of "classic low self-esteem with high narcissism" that must be a reference to Theo. So not only is she a slut, she's a narcissistic one who's covering up her low self-esteem. I'm sure bisexuals around the country will shortly be subjected to similar pop-psychology evaluations.

Lest there be any doubt of Theo's lack of real personhood, she is the only one of the main characters who has no last name. Even in the credits, she is listed simply as "Theo." As the movie progresses, she is relegated farther and farther into the background, eventually becoming nothing more than another warm body to be threatened by the house and its ghosts.

Ms. Zeta-Jones has played bi before, nearly stealing the show as the talented and charismatic villainess Sala in the 1996 flick *The Phantom*. She does so reasonably well — when she's on-screen in either role, she's sexy as all get-out, and you get the impression that she would be a good actress if she had *anything* resembling decent dialogue or a real character to work with.

Alas, it seems Hollywood has yet to know what to do with a bisexual woman in a movie.

BAD GIRLS AND SICK BOYS: FANTASIES IN CONTEMPORARY ART AND CULTURE

By Linda S. Kauffman
(University of California Press, 1999)
ISBN 0520210328 \$18.95

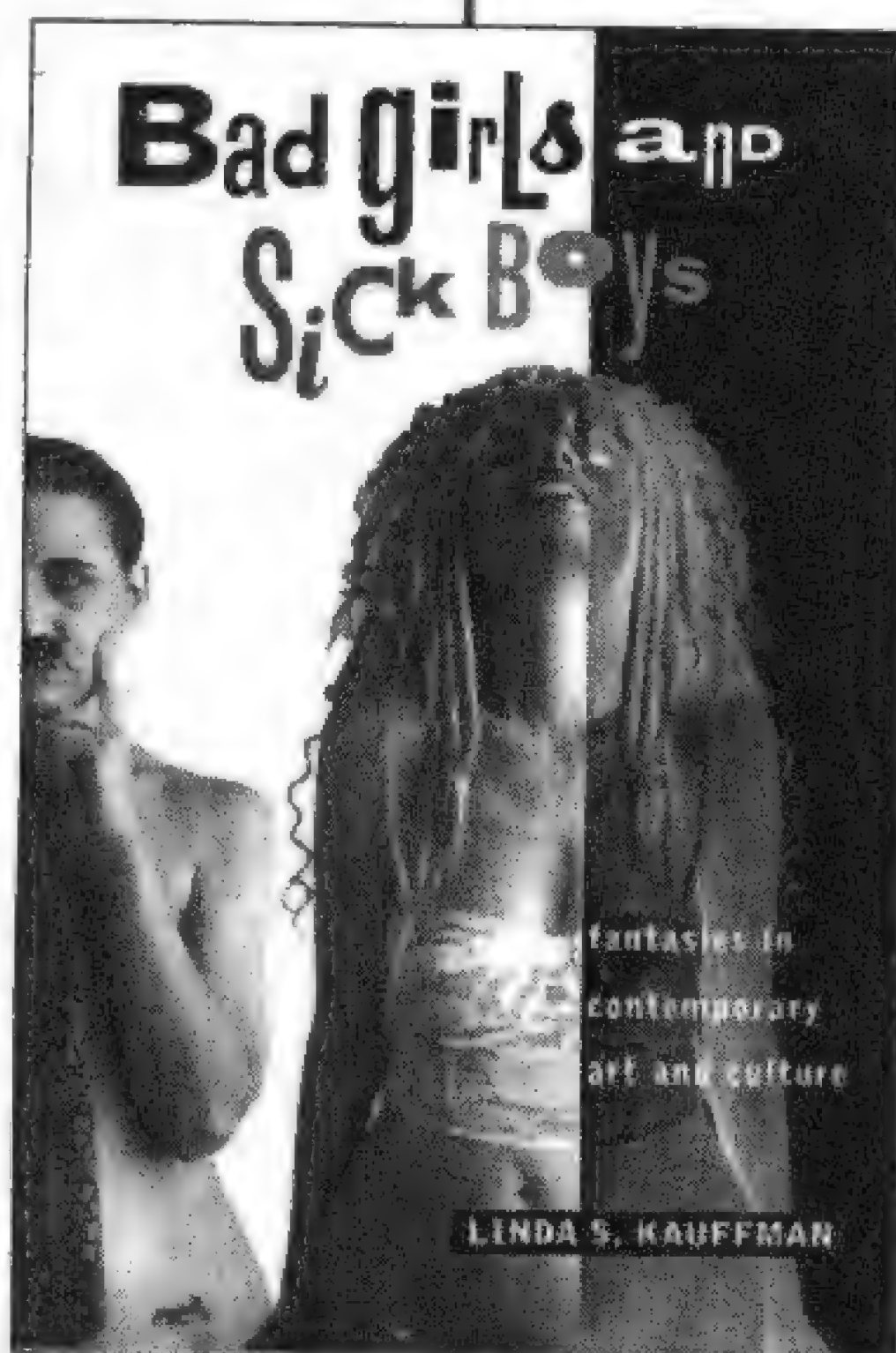
reviewed by Michael Lefkowitz

You'll not find the word 'bisexual' once in this book, and only oblique references to transsexuality. Instead, Linda S. Kauffman's *Bad Girls and Sick Boys* is a critical survey of contemporary writers, filmmakers, and performance artists whose common denominator is an interest in exploring how the body, both physical and social, is represented. Specifically, Kauffman focuses on the construction of ideas regarding sex, race and gender.

Kauffman contends that each of her subjects incorporates (note the root meaning of this word: to make flesh of) a performative anti-aesthetic in their (often literal) body of work. Their collective strategy is to confront and explore the shifting, and often taboo, cultural landscape of the liminal and marginalized. All of the artists she discusses explicitly transgress boundaries and confront audience expectations. Much of the work addressed in her book is not for the squeamish or faint of heart. Put more simply, these are all people who *will* fuck with your assumptions. Their common battleground: the socially constructed body.

In Kauffman's analysis, it is their focus on (one might almost say exaltation of) the bad and the sick which provides the conceptual underpinnings for their oppositional strategies. Of particular note is her analysis of the performance work of Bob Flanagan and Orlan, and the writing of J. G. Ballard. Flanagan, who died recently due to complications from a lifelong battle with cystic fibrosis, devoted his artistic career to publicly exploring the corporal limitations of his "sick" body — sick in the dual sense of physical illness and of perversion. Invading the ostensibly sacred

confines of the museum and the art gallery, he exhibited both his extreme masochism and his steady physical deterioration from disease. In one memorable performance, visitors to the gallery in which he had installed himself as a living exhibition would find him on display in his hospital bed, suddenly and



unexpectedly to be hoisted by a winch to be suspended naked and upside down from the ceiling.

Orlan also emphasizes the erotic and performative aspects of the medicalized body. She has repeatedly undergone plastic surgery, again staged in public venues (often using electronic broadcast and interactive media), emphasizing specific facial features of cherished "old master" paintings (such as the Mona Lisa) in order to re-create herself as a composite of the many cultural signifiers for feminine beauty within the Western tradition. Proclaiming herself the first woman-to-woman transsexual (and thereby incurring the wrath of many in the transgendered community, with whom she shares little, if any, common ideology), she problematizes and de-naturalizes the notion of the essential or non-culturally inscribed body.

J. G. Ballard, in much of his writing, also explores and eroticizes the intersection of technology and the (social) body. His text *The Atrocity Exhibition* becomes a central metaphor in Kauffman's analysis. Ballard's obsession with pornography is set in opposition to those of Andrea Dworkin, Catharine MacKinnon and Edwin Meese. But where Ballard focuses upon the pornographic use of technology as a system of alienation and control, Dworkin, MacKinnon, and Meese see pornography as a dangerous threat from outside of the system — a transgressive social force against which the repressive apparatus of state control and censorship must be rallied.

Turning her attention to the ongoing battle over censorship and the definition of pornography, Kauffman places the "atrocity exhibitions" staged by each of her chosen cultural agents in direct opposition to right-wing oppression. The right to control how the "body," both physical and social, is permitted to be represented becomes the actual site of the battle between these two opposing ideologies. The body, in Kauffman's analysis, becomes the place where the act of transgression or repression actually happens. As her argument unfolds, she devotes more of her discussion to the impact of the actions of the Meese Commission on the possibility of maintaining genuine artistic freedom in the United States.

Kauffman's text is most relevant in its highlighting of the political importance of this struggle. It falls short, however, in that it often relies on an assumed complete agreement on the part of the reader to carry its meaning. For instance, while chances are that 99.9% of the presumed audience for this book would agree with her assertion that MacKinnon is insane, I often found myself wishing that she had spent more time seriously addressing MacKinnon's arguments. While "Censorship is wrong" and "Transgressive art is good" are certainly opinions her readers might be sympathetic with, they do not serve on their own as truly engaged critique.

As a brief introduction to the works of the artists she admires, this book serves quite well. As a genuine academic study of "fantasies in contemporary art and culture", it could have used

a narrowing of scope, and more discussion of the actual questions raised by the works discussed. To link, for instance, the performance work of Orlan with the horror films of David Cronenberg solely on the basis that they are both "sick boys and girls" does not ultimately do justice to the many deep fears and uncertainties that each is addressing, nor to some of their very real ideological differences.

"... while chances are that 99.9% of the presumed audience for this book would agree with her assertion that [Catharine] MacKinnon is insane, I often found myself wishing that she had spent more time seriously addressing MacKinnon's arguments."

Lastly, while Kauffman is to be commended for paying serious attention to artists who are often marginalized and ignored, she has left some serious gaps. With the exception of some filmmakers who are only invoked when issues of "race" are specifically addressed (and primarily in the context of a black/white dichotomy), I found her choice of cultural agents to be overwhelmingly white. It would have added greatly to the scope of her argument if the prescient social interrogations of Coco Fusco, Guillermo Gomez-Pena, Ana Mendieta, Leslie Marmon Silko and Wanda Coleman (to name but a few) had been included.

The underlying assumption that "race" is an issue only for those who are marked as being "third world" or "minority" is extremely problematic. Whiteness is equally constructed, and to give it an unquestioned centrality within her arguments is to tacitly reinforce the dominant (white) culture's standards. She does not delve into any of the possible questions that would arise if these white artists were also seen as being marked by race. As is far too often the case, whiteness is maintained within this text as an unacknowledged standard of reference through its very invisibility. A black filmmaker needs be acknowledged as such and interpreted through that filter, yet to refer to Orlan, Flanagan, Ballard, and Cronenberg as contemporary white voices obsessed with the dissolution and transgression of the boundaries of the socially constructed white body seems literally unthinkable.

This is a loss to her argument, I think. If the dominant culture were to be seen as having gained its apparent centrality through imperialism, and not simply happenstance, it would give new force to a serious discussion of what is really at stake in the battle over how the body might be allowed to be represented.

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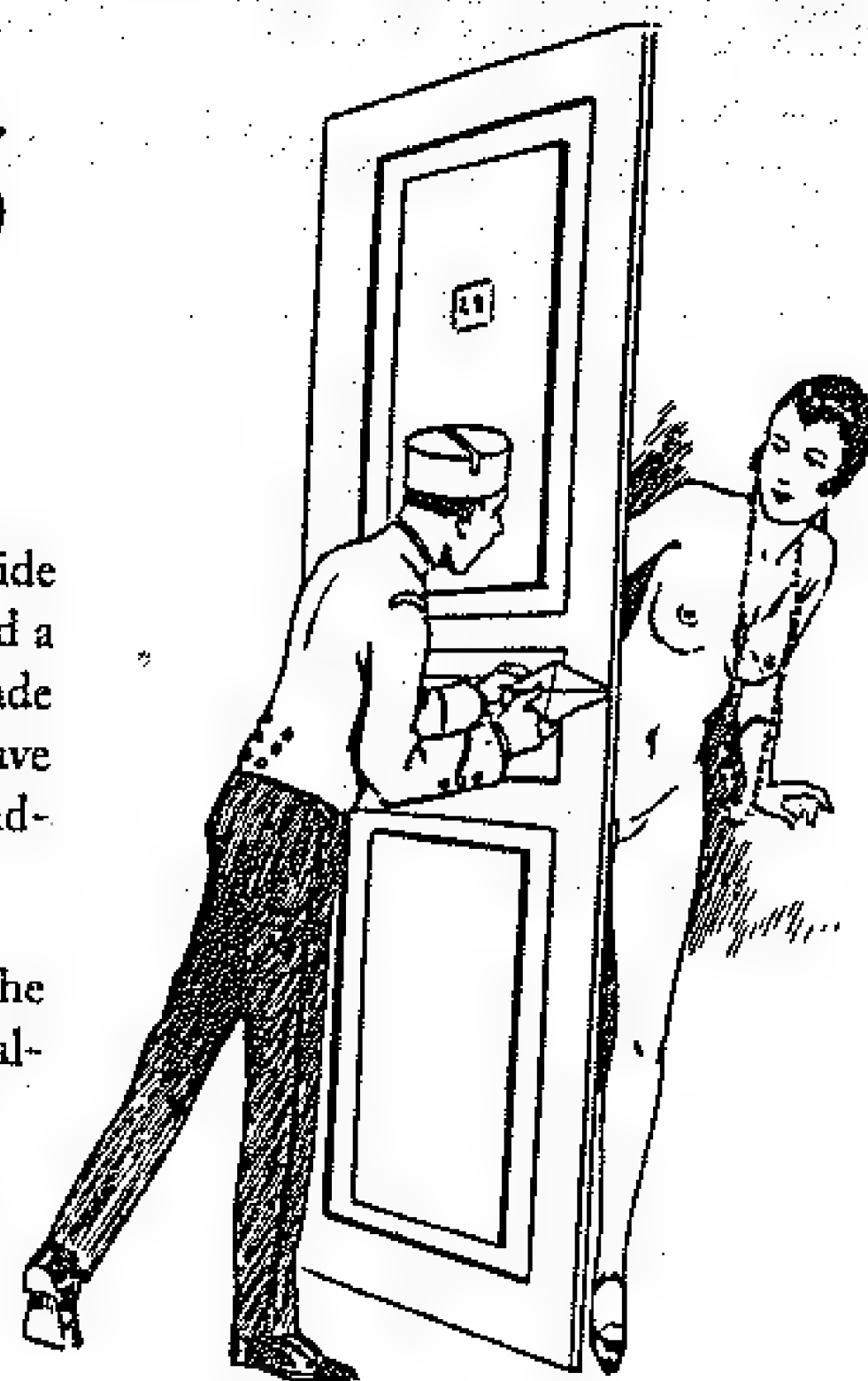
Protester Teargasses San Diego Pride Parade

[SAN DIEGO, CA] — A protester threw a tear gas grenade at marchers in the San Diego Pride parade on July 24. After the canister detonated, four people were taken to the hospital and around a dozen others were treated at the scene, including seven children and a pregnant woman. The grenade was believed to be military issue, and police are checking its serial number, but no arrests or leads have been announced. San Diego's BGLT community has offered a \$12,000 reward for information leading to the perpetrator's arrest.

The grenade was thrown as the Family Matters contingent passed. That group, a local chapter of the national Family Pride Coalition, included many children and grandparents. Among those hospitalized was a three-year-old girl with asthma. The parade resumed within 20 minutes of the attack.

"This is an example of the increasing incidence of hate crimes against our community," said San Diego Lesbian and Gay Pride Executive Director Mandy Shultz. The greater San Diego area has recently experienced intense controversy over guarantees of equal treatment for lesbian and gay students in public schools. Last year, openly lesbian City Councilmember Christine Kehoe made a strong showing in a bid to unseat a Republican member of the state House.

(Source: PlanetOut)



ENDA Update: As Congress Reconsiders Bill, BiNet USA Withdraws Support

Lead sponsors of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) held a June 24 press conference to announce its fifth reintroduction. ENDA remains the only nondiscrimination bill based on sexual orientation ever to receive a floor vote in the U.S. Congress. ENDA has 35 cosponsors in the Senate and 153 in the House, with more expected.

However, in late July, members of BiNet USA voted at their annual national meeting to withdraw support for the proposed legislation until it includes protections for discrimination based on "gender expression."

"ENDA is inconsistent with BiNet's beliefs," argued the motion, introduced by transgender activist and BiNet Arizona member Monica Helms.

The motion also cited a recent survey by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force which found that 28% of BGLT people had experienced discrimination based on "gender expression." Many bisexuals could slip through the cracks if ENDA isn't broadened, the motion said.

Under the July vote, BiNet USA will continue to withhold its support for the bill until ENDA's employment discrimination clauses are broadened to include protections based on "gender identity" and "gender expression" as well as sexual orientation.

Lead sponsors include Sens. Jim Jeffords (R-VT), Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Joseph Lieberman (D-CT), and Reps. Barney Frank (D-MA) and Christopher Shays (R-CT). President Bill Clinton has indicated he supports the bill as well. Standing behind ENDA is the Human Rights Campaign, which cites a poll it commissioned in 1998 as showing 58% of Americans support ENDA's passage.

HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch said, "Congress has the power to end a major injustice," the fact that it remains legal to fire bisexual, gay or lesbian people simply because of "their real or perceived sexual orientation. Most Americans find that abhorrent." The bill would prohibit employers with more than 15 employees from using sexual orientation as the basis of employment decisions, except for religious institutions.

Rep. Frank told the *Southern Voice* newspaper, based in Atlanta, GA that while the "votes are there" in the House, the Republican majority will never let the bill come to the floor for a vote. But Kevin Ivers, with the Log Cabin Republicans, pointed out that the bill's close 1996 vote happened in a Republican Senate, and its only committee hearing came at the behest of Republican lead sponsor Sen. Jeffords.

The bill's reticence on discrimination against transgendered people, though designed to aid its passage, has sapped its support in BGLT community, with not only BiNet but also the NGLTF and other groups refusing to endorse it.

HRC said it was "saddened" by this lack of support, and indicated it would support an amendment to add gender identity to ENDA's protections, if one were offered. Frank said "no congressional votes will be lost" because of queer groups' non-endorsement of the bill.

(Source: BiNet USA and PlanetOut)

West Hollywood Hate Crime Results in One Hospitalization, Three Arrests

[WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA] — According to a report by Los Angeles television station KNBC, a group of transgendered people were attacked in a restaurant parking lot in West Hollywood on Sunday, July 18th, 1999.

Though details at press time remained sketchy, reports indicated that at 3:50 a.m., a group of transgendered people were attacked by three suspects wielding baseball bats in a restaurant parking lot near Santa Monica Boulevard and La Brea Avenue. At least one person was injured and has been taken to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center for treatment of head and back injuries. She was reported in stable condition at the time of *ATM's* publication.

All three suspects in this crime have been arrested and booked on suspicion of attempted murder and involvement in a hate crime. West Hollywood does include transgendered individuals in its hate crime laws.

(Source: Gwendolyn Ann Smith)

Minnesota MTF Teacher Resigns Amidst Parent Complaints, Praise

[BLAINE, MN] — Transsexual woman Alyssa Williams resigned from her job as music teacher at Roosevelt Middle School in March after parents at the school, located in Blaine, MN, threatened to remove their children from the school if Williams were allowed to teach.

"She was driven out and was never given a chance to be a teacher," said Beth Gerard, a parent of two children at RMS. "This is a shame. She was never judged according to her ability." Ms. Williams could not be reached for comment.

The *Minneapolis Star Tribune* reports that parent Sandy Crosby had her sixth grade daughter removed from Williams' class. Crosby, who has never met Williams, said she was relieved to hear of the resignation. "He was not a good role model. I'm not pleased that he resigned, but I didn't want him to be around my children."

Kathy Born, another parent with children at the school, said of Williams, "It's a shame. She's a person just like you and I. Roosevelt is going to lose a good teacher." Kathy's husband Steven added, "All we know is what our kids said, and they said she was doing a real good job."

Parents in Touch, a local group formed to protest Ms. Williams' hiring, enlisted the aid of the Minnesota Christian Coalition and Pat Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice to challenge Minnesota's Human Rights Law, which includes protection for transgender people.

Said Ms. Crosby, "For them to have special privileges like blacks and Native Americans, that's just a bunch of fill-in-the-blank. When it comes to this sexual diversity, that is not okay and we don't want it in our schools."

(Source: In Your Face)

U.S. Senate Approves Hate Crimes Bill

The U.S. Senate approved the Hate Crimes Prevention Act (HCPA), which would make anti-gay assaults subject to federal intervention for the first time, as part of a larger spending bill. The measure now faces a House-Senate conference committee, since the House's version of the bill doesn't include any such provision. Some House Republicans are determined to see the HCPA removed, and the Clinton Administration may see the provision as a bargaining chip. The administration has already warned activists it may have to veto the bill for unrelated reasons.

Also, another hate crimes provision that doesn't protect on the basis of sexual orientation was added to another appropriations bill by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT), and the Human Rights Campaign believes the two provisions are mutually exclusive. So it could be months before HCPA's final fate is known.

HCPA has already gone farther than ever before — it died last year — and in fact has gone farther than any explicitly gay-friendly measure since the enactment of the Hate Crimes Statistics Act of 1990, the first federal law to use the term "sexual orientation." The bill has 40 Senate co-sponsors, including six Republicans, and 180 House co-sponsors. The bill faces a House Judiciary Committee hearing scheduled for August 4.

HCPA would add gender, disability and sexual orientation to protected classes under the existing hate crimes law. The current law only applies to crimes on federal property, but HCPA would affect any incident relating to interstate commerce, including crimes using guns made in another state and crimes committed in vehicles. HCPA is limited to crimes resulting in death or bodily harm, and federal interventions must be certified personally by the U.S. Attorney General. It includes funds for expanded federal investigation and prosecution, and would serve as a backup in situations where state or local authorities were unable or unwilling to act.

Sen. Hatch referred to the death of Matthew Shepard in introducing his competing hate crimes measure, despite the fact that his proposal wouldn't allow the federal government to respond to anti-gay bias crimes. Hatch also said hate crimes "incite community unrest, and ultimately they are downright un-American."

(Source: PlanetOut)

Anything That Moves is pleased to announce that Charles Anders has accepted the post of ATM News Editor. Congratulations, Charles!

All news briefs have been culled from press releases sent to *Anything That Moves* by the named organizations or written by staff. To submit a press release, email it to:

press@anythingthatmoves.com

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NGLTF's New Family Policy Program Seeks Inclusive Definitions, Policies

The Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) said it was creating a Family Policy program to "secure inclusive definitions of family in national, state and local policy contexts." The program will undertake research, policy analysis, coalition-building, strategy development and collaboration with a "wide range of family-focused organizations" to ensure the needs of BGLT families are considered and protected.

NGLTF Executive Director Kerry Lobel said the BGLT movement is "characterized as being anti-family" despite the "revolution in family creation" taking place in BGLT communities.

The new program is funded by gifts from several parents, including Seattle Councilwoman Tina Podlowski and a donation through the Lesbian Equity Foundation of Silicon Valley by Jennifer and Kathy Levinson.

NGLTF said nearly 50 anti-BGLT family bills had been filed in state legislatures as of June 1999. To counter this onslaught, the Family Policy Program will marshal data to support inclusive definitions of family in local, state and national policy debates, and build a pro-BGLT family network among BGLT and mainstream organizations working on family issues. The program also aims to educate the

general public about the "value and values of BGLT families."

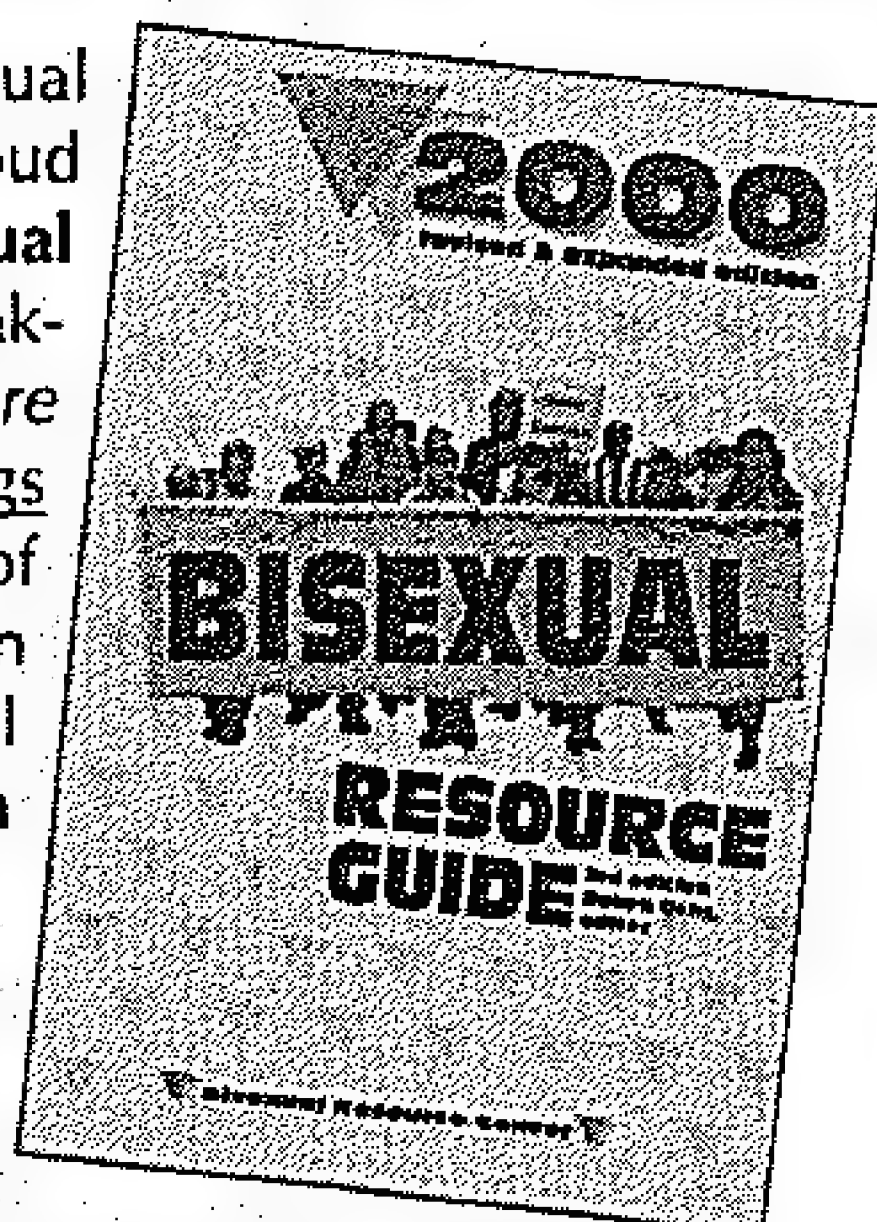
Policy Institute Director Urvashi Vaid said nationally renowned lesbian attorney and family advocate Paula Ettelbrick has been hired to direct the program. A former director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Ettelbrick has worked on family policy issues at the local, state and national levels for the past 13 years. As legislative counsel for the Empire State Pride Agenda, Ettelbrick is credited with helping to win passage of New York City's domestic partnership policy and drafting pro-BGLT family laws at the municipal and state levels.

Ettelbrick and her partner, Suzanne Goldberg, have a two-year old son and are expecting another child in September. She teaches a course on sexuality and the law at New York University Law School and the University of Michigan Law School. She also coordinated the national "Equality Begins at Home" campaign, including 350 rallies and other events in all 50 states plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia last March.

(Source: NGLTF press release)

Announcing The New BISEXUAL RESOURCE GUIDE 2000!

Editor Robyn Ochs and Boston's Bisexual Resource Center are thrilled and proud to present the 3rd edition of the **Bisexual Resource Guide**. Two years in the making, the guide has *expanded to more than 300 pages*, with *2100+ listings* from 49 countries. Every kind of bisexual and bi-inclusive organization in the world is included: political groups, social gatherings, youth groups, bi people of color coalitions, religious centers, HIV/AIDS support, places to dance and sing, and more!



Special features include:

- An expanded Bi-Bibliography, with guide to non-fiction referenced by subject – perfect for researchers, students
- Updated and expanded Bi Film Guide
- Bi resources on the Internet
- New articles including "Finding Bisexuality in Fiction," "How to Start a Support Group," "What Do We Know About Bisexuality?" and much more.
- Lots of new photos — you're probably in one of them!

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Send check or money order (payable to BRC) with your name and address to BRC, Dept. ATM, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140. Guides are \$12.95, postage paid. Buy two or more copies, get a free Bi Pride bumper sticker (choose with or without text – see www.biresource.org/biproducts)!

The Bisexual Resource Center is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization. All proceeds from the Guide support its publication costs and other BRC activities. Donations always welcome. Visit us at www.biresource.org.



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FTM Conference Set for October in Los Angeles

[LOS ANGELES, CA] - More than 500 individuals are expected to attend Forward Motion: Celebrating Cultures, Advocacy, and FTM Lives, a fall conference for female-to-male transgender people held on Oct. 8-10, 1999 in Los Angeles at the Hilton Burbank Airport and Convention Center.

The international conference is for people who were assigned female at birth or in childhood and who have masculine self-identification some or all of the time. Significant others, spouses, family members, health care providers, friends and supporters, as well as those questioning their gender identity are welcome to attend.

Forward Motion will offer three days of programs covering a variety of topics including relationships, family issues, spirituality, health and medical matters, sexualities, FTM history, political activism, the arts, FTM/MTF tensions and alliances, legal issues, and body-building and fitness, as well as issues of youth, aging, race and ethnicity. This conference will also include an art exhibit, vendors, book signings and social events.

The list of confirmed guests includes:

- * Kate Bornstein, performance artist, actress, and author of *Gender Outlaw* and *My Gender Workbook*.
- * Jamison Green, FTM International President, presenting the award-winning photographs of Loren Cameron.
- * Jordy Jones, artist, filmmaker, writer, and curator of TransArt 99, a visual art show that will be open throughout the conference.
- * Mary Boenke, editor of *TransForming Families: Real Stories about Transgendered Loved Ones*.
- * Jed Bell, editor of the *FTM Newsletter*.

Registration forms are available by writing to FTMCLA, P.O. Box 922342, Sylmar, CA 92392-2342, or by e-mailing Forward Motion at CONF99FTM@aol.com.

The registration form is available at www.hometown.aol.com/conf99ftm. Registration before 9/15/99 is \$90; after 9/15, the fee is \$125. People with lower incomes may apply for scholarships on a first-come, first-served basis.

Oregon Same-Sex Marriage Ban Defeated

A bill that would have put a ban on same-sex marriage on a statewide ballot suffered a crucial defeat in the Oregon House. Its supporters chose to introduce the measure through the legislature instead of using a citizen petition, but the move backfired: The House stripped the bill of a clause preventing judicial rulings recognizing unmarried domestic partners.

The state Senate sent it back to committee, where it was expected to die at the legislative session's end in late July. The bill passed by the House had been downgraded from a constitutional amendment to an authorization for the legislature to define marriage, a power that body already has.

The bill's setback was credited to vigorous lobbying by Basic Rights Oregon, and to complacency on the part of the bill's sponsors. But legislative failure only means that the Oregon Christian Coalition will begin collecting signatures for the ballot initiative. Three Republicans helped to scuttle the bill, calling it unnecessary and divisive. Sen. John Lim (R-Gresham) said he'd received 40 calls in one night opposing the bill. Meanwhile, the bill's backers had been devoting their energies to an anti-abortion measure.

(Source: Planet Out)

ILGA Celebrates 30 Years of Fighting for the Right to Love, Right to Sexual Self-Determination

International Lesbian and Gay Association co-secretaries Jennifer Wilson from Australia and Jordi Petit from Spain issued a Pride '99 statement called "Thirty Years Fighting for the Right to Love." They cited victories such as the Council of Europe's 1981 declaration "recognizing people's right to sexual self-determination," the removal of homosexuality from the World Health Organization's list of diseases, and Amnesty International's more recent decision to include prisoners "jailed for their sexual orientation" among prisoners of conscience.

Wilson and Petit said 86 countries had legalized homosexuality, 14 countries had anti-discrimination laws and seven countries recognize same-sex couples, but "we are still a long way from equality." In Latin America, a lesbian or gay man is killed on average every three days, they pointed out, and some countries still apply the death penalty for same-sex intercourse.

(Source: Planet out)

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The Web site for the **Anything Bisexual**



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NGLTF Releases Comprehensive Resource on Domestic Partnership Benefits

[Washington, DC] - The Policy Institute of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) has published a comprehensive resource on domestic partnership benefits. The manual describes various strategies to achieve domestic partnership benefits, dissects policies already enacted, lists companies and municipalities offering domestic partnership benefits, and includes sample policies. The manual also explains the arguments for and against these benefits, concluding that the pros far outweigh the cons.

Selected facts from the NGLTF manual:

- * According to the 1990 U.S. Census, unmarried couples comprised approximately 4.5 million families; 33% of these unmarried couples were of the same sex.
- * Currently more than 10% of all employers offer benefits to domestic partners of their employees. Among companies with more than 5,000 employees, almost 25% offer these benefits.
- * Benefits comprise approximately 40% of a worker's compensation. Employees who can obtain benefits for their spouses are, in

effect, more highly paid than employees in relationships that are not legally recognized. The movement for domestic partnership benefits is rooted in the democratic notion of equal pay for equal work.

- * Domestic partnership benefits are not costly and enrollment is low; generally less than 2.5% of employees elect these benefits.
- * Domestic partnership benefits are tangible and real, including medical care, bereavement leave, hospital visitation, and a host of other benefits. In a country where unemployment is an all-too-common reality and the government does not provide universal health care, access to medical care and other valuable employment benefits is critical.

The *Domestic Partnership Organizing Manual* offers information on: how domestic partnership is defined, arguments for and against DP benefits, who supports DP, resource groups and contact information, sector by sector policies, private and public sectors, union or membership organizations, sample proposals for DP benefits, key court



cases affecting the rights of domestic partners, and more.

Copies of *The Domestic Partnership Organizing Manual* may be ordered by calling 202-332-6483.

The manual can also be downloaded by visiting the NGLTF Web site at www.nglft.org/pub.html.

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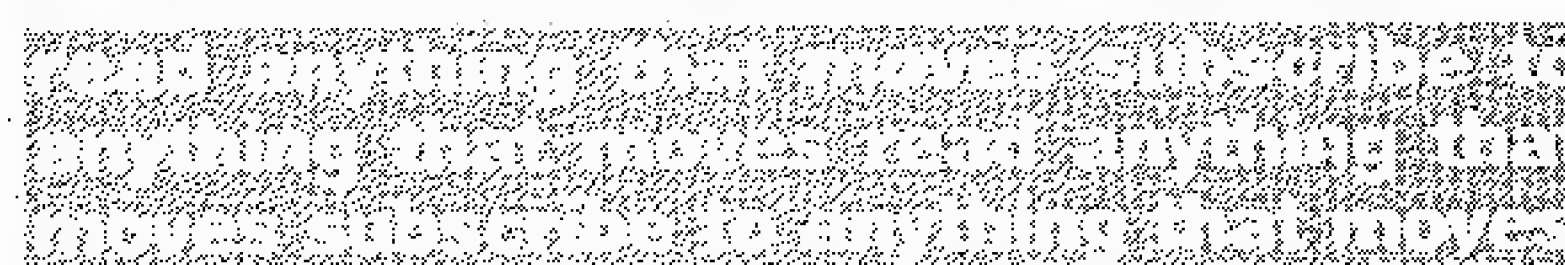
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Who's Watching Big Brother?

by Liz Highleyman

SEX TOYS OK IN ALABAMA

U.S. District Judge Lynwood Smith ruled in April that Alabama's ban on sex toys (see *Anything That Moves* #18) was "overly broad" and bears "no rational relation to a legitimate state interest." The 1998 law made the sale or distribution of "any obscene material or any device designed or marketed as useful primarily for the stimulation of human genital organs" a misdemeanor punishable by a \$10,000 fine and up to a year in jail.

Six women who either sell sex toys or deem them necessary for sexual satisfaction challenged the law on privacy grounds; however, Judge Smith did not uphold this argument, saying "this court refuses to extend the fundamental right of privacy to protect plaintiffs' interest" in using sex toys. Nevertheless, sex toy store proprietor Sherri Williams was pleased with the ruling, stating, "We succeeded in kicking the government out of our bedroom."

LOUISIANA SODOMY LAW DEFEATED

This February, a Louisiana state appeals court struck down that state's sodomy law, which made it a felony to have oral or anal sex, regardless of the sex of the participants. The so-called "crime against nature" statute dated back to 1805. The three-judge panel ruled unanimously that the government has no business regulating the private sex lives of consenting adults.

Eleven states still have broad sodomy laws on their books; six others ban only same-sex sodomy.

MEDICAL JOURNAL EDITOR LOSES JOB TO ORAL SEX

The American Medical Association in January fired the editor of its prestigious journal after the magazine published an article about college students' attitudes about oral sex. *JAMA* editor Dr. George Lundberg was dismissed after the appearance of a report by Dr. June Reinisch, the retired director of the Kinsey Institute, which found that 59% of college students do not believe that oral sex constitutes "having sex." The article appeared during the heat of the Clinton impeachment trial, during which Clinton presented a similar rationale to explain his prior statements that he had not "had sexual relations" with Monica Lewinsky. Because of the timing of the article, which reported on research conducted in 1991, AMA Executive Vice President Sr. Ratcliffe Anderson accused Lundberg of focusing on "sensationalism, not science." Lundberg has since taken a position as editor of Medscape, a major medical Web site.

"LEWD ACTS" CHARGES AGAINST GAY JOURNALIST DISMISSED

On July 7, Sacramento Superior Court Judge Rudolph Loncke dismissed all charges against award-winning gay journalist Bruce Mirken. Mirken faced charges of attempted lewd acts with a minor, which arose from an Internet sting in which an undercover police detective posed as an underage teenage boy in an America Online (AOL) chat room. Mirken, who writes frequently about issues affecting queer youth, conversed with and met the "boy" in a public park to gather material for a future story.

In May, Mirken was found not guilty of child pornography possession charges related to unsolicited and immediately deleted images from the Internet that were found when his computer was seized in connection with the same case. After the prosecution presented its case, Judge Loncke ruled that it

had not produced enough evidence to proceed. Although Mirken was relieved, he was also disappointed that he had not been able to present more information about the issues facing gay teens.

According to Mirken, "I know there are kids out there today putting out pleas for help," and there are gay adults who will not help them out of fear of facing similar accusations. "Some kid out there is going to die because no one will help him because they are afraid it's a trick," Mirken said.

NO LONGER BANNED IN BOSTON

A statue entitled "Bacchante and Infant Faun" was returned to its intended place in Boston this spring after having been banned for a century. The statue was to be installed in the courtyard of the newly renovated Boston Public Library, the nation's oldest. Although the infant in the statue is nude, the work was originally banned because it features a woman holding a bunch of grapes, which temperance movement activists in the late 1800s interpreted as encouraging alcohol consumption. The statue was branded "a monument to inebriety," and the Rev. James B. Brady — a precursor to the extremely homophobic televangelist Jerry Falwell — attacked the statue as a representation of "the worst type of harlotry with which the earth was ever afflicted." The statue was created by Frederic Macmonnies, and was donated to New York's Metropolitan Museum after the outcry. The Boston Public Library commissioned a copy in 1993.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT APPEALS COPA INJUNCTION

In April, the U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ) appealed a lower court ruling that halted the enforcement of the Children's Online Protection Act (COPA). The DoJ asked a federal court to set aside the Feb. 1 injunction by District Judge Lowell Reed blocking enforcement of the law. A three-judge Court of Appeals panel will hear the

case later this year. The COPA, which resembles the 1996 Communications Decency Act (CDA), seeks to bar Web sites from publishing material that is deemed "harmful to minors" unless they can verify users' ages, a procedure opponents claim is prohibitively difficult and expensive. Sixteen organizations, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, challenged the COPA on First Amendment grounds (see *Anything That Moves* #19).

INTERNET FILTERING LEGISLATION PROCEEDS

In February, Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Ernest Hollings (D-SC) introduced the Children's Internet Protection Act, legislation intended to require schools and libraries with federally-subsidized Internet access to install filtering software. The Senate Commerce Committee approved the measure in late June, and the House of Representatives passed a related proposal as part of its juvenile justice bill. Critics of the legislation claim that it is yet another attempt to impose illegal restrictions on free speech, similar to the 1996 CDA, which a federal court ruled unconstitutional. The ACLU and the American Library Association contend that the measure could lead to the blocking of sites that contain useful and appropriate material, such as health information and resources for queer youth.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION BLAMES MEDIA FOR YOUTH VIOLENCE

In the wake of the April shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, CO, parents and politicians are desperately searching for someone to blame. Among the popular targets have been the media, the Internet, and video games. House Judiciary Chairman Henry Hyde (R-IL) proposed a law intended to limit youth access to sexually explicit or violent material in movies, books, music, and video games. Hyde said the bill was "designed to slow the flood of toxic waste into kids' minds." The measure failed in June by a House vote of 282-146.

According to Representative Mark Foley (R-FL), the measure "tramples on the First Amendment" and "won't solve the problem." According to the ACLU, which opposed the proposal, "We're really concerned about extending the obscenity exception to violence... [M]useums, libraries, schools, and all sorts of institutions could really be in jeopardy." The Columbine

shootings stirred widespread cultural anxiety related to the killers' clothing, computer gaming habits, political beliefs, and purported bisexual orientation.

RELIGIOUS RIGHT PROPOSES NEW "HC" RATING FOR QUEER CONTENT

In February, the Christian Action Network proposed that the Federal Communications Commission add a new "HC" rating to label television programs that contain homosexual content. Currently, voluntary TV ratings exist for shows that contain violence, sex, and adult language. The religious right group is launching its grassroots campaign in response to what it claims are "more than two dozen homosexual characters" on weekly network TV. According to a press release from the group, "Unless these producers are trying to promote a secret agenda, they should have no problem with alerting parents that their programs contain homosexual content." People for the American Way opposed the proposal, saying it was "an obvious attempt to stigmatize an entire group of Americans." Motion Picture Association of America President Jack Valenti called it "an inhumane proposal that should be ignored."

ANTI-ABORTION WEB SITE RAISES FUROR, LAWSUITS

The Oregon-based Nuremberg Files Web site, which featured the names and other identifying information of doctors who perform abortions, was put on trial in January. The lawsuit was brought by Planned Parenthood, several physicians, and a women's clinic against the American Coalition of Life Advocates and Advocates for Life, two anti-abortion groups that sponsored the site. Opponents of the site claim that it promoted violence against doctors who perform abortions and amounts to terrorism, while site defenders claimed that it was protected political speech. The two sides disagreed about whether the Web site and the "Dirty Dozen" series of wanted posters issued by the defendants crossed the line of being direct threats of violence.

In early February, a jury ruled that the site did amount to a threat, and ordered the defendants to pay \$107 million in damages. Following the verdict, Mindspring, the site's Internet service provider, withdrew services from the Nuremberg Files, and federal judge Robert Jones ordered the defendants to stop

publishing wanted posters or personal information about physicians. In late February, the site was re-posted on a site based in the Netherlands by a woman who says she favors abortion rights but wants to protect free speech. To prevent acts of violence against the listed physicians, she says on her site, she has added the names of several anti-abortion rights activists to the site. Through an appeals process, the case may eventually make its way to the Supreme Court.

TGS OFF THAI TV

In May, Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai ordered television producers to stop broadcasting shows that feature transsexual and cross-dressing performers. The Thai government claims that programs that "promote sexual abnormalities" are harmful to children. Senior broadcast official Kulya Boonak said the prime minister received numerous complaints about such programming via his Web site. Dancer Pakorn Pimthon of the Gay Group Against AIDS in Bangkok told the Associated Press that, "Our appearance in television shows and soap operas cannot pose any influence to youth." Although the government's request was presented as a recommendation, it is being taken as an official directive, and TV broadcasters have begun screening scripts.

FALWELL SLAMS LILITH FAIR

Jerry Falwell's *National Liberty Journal*, which provoked great hilarity last February when it claimed that purple, purse-carrying teletubby Tinky Winky was gay, has now set its sights on the Lilith Fair concert series. The Lilith Fair, which features independent women musicians, takes its name from a figure in ancient Hebrew mythology said to have been Adam's first wife who refused to submit to her husband. Falwell's magazine characterizes Lilith as a demon, and issued a warning to "parents who may not wish their children to participate in a music festival that celebrates a pagan (sic) figure." The journal asserts that according to legend, Lilith went on "a killing spree, seducing and murdering her own demonic male offspring and then slaying their children."

Liz Higleyman is a freelance journalist and health educator. She is associate editor of the anthology Bisexual Politics: Theories, Queries and Visions (Haworth Press, 1995).

GET YOURSELF CONNECTED!

About BABN

The Bay Area Bisexual Network is an alliance of bisexual and bi-supportive groups, individuals, and resources in the San Francisco Bay Area. BABN sponsors a speakers' network of bisexuals from diverse backgrounds, races, lifestyles, and cultures who speak on all topics and issues concerning bisexuality. Call 415-703-7977, voice mail box #1, or write BABN at 2261 Market St., #496, San Francisco, CA 94114-1600.

BIS BEYOND THE BAY

AUSTRALIAN BISEXUAL NETWORK: National information, support, advocacy and social network for bi men, women, partners/families, and bi and bi-friendly groups. P.O. Box 490, Lutwyche, Brisbane, QLD 4030. www.ozemail.com.au/~ausbinet/index.html

BINET USA: National bisexual network dedicated to visibility, resource sharing, and political activism toward a multicultural, co-gendered, bisexual community. Quarterly newsletter, conferences. Info: P.O. Box 7327, Langley Park, MD 20787 USA. 202-986-7186.

BISEXUAL RESOURCE CENTER: Projects include The Bisexual Archives and the Bisexual Resource Office. P.O. Box 639, Cambridge, MA 02140 USA. 617-424-9595.

GLASGOW BISEXUAL NETWORK: Social support and health information for

bisexuals and their supporters in Glasgow, Scotland, UK. Volunteers and bi-friendly folks needed to help run the group. Regular social meetings at the Gay & Lesbian Centre, 11 Dixon St., Glasgow. For more information, contact: Dominic Aveyard, GBN Group Coordinator, 127 Glenhead St., Park-house, Glasgow, Scotland, UK, G22-6DQ. 0141-336-4548 evenings and weekdays.

GRUPO TRIANGULO ROSA: To help the human rights of BGLT people, struggle against discrimination, help coordinate a Central American movement for the rights of sexual minorities, and prevent HIV. Apartado Postal 1619-4050, Alajuela, Costa Rica. 506-23-2411.

MOSCOW BI-SEX CLUB: Union for people with unorthodox desires. Looking for international contacts, ideas, support. P.O. Box N3, Moscow Russia 123308.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST BISEXUAL NETWORK: A packet of materials of interest to bisexuals, including a newsletter, is available from the Unitarian Church by sending \$10 to UUBN, P.O. Box 10818, Portland, ME 04104 USA.

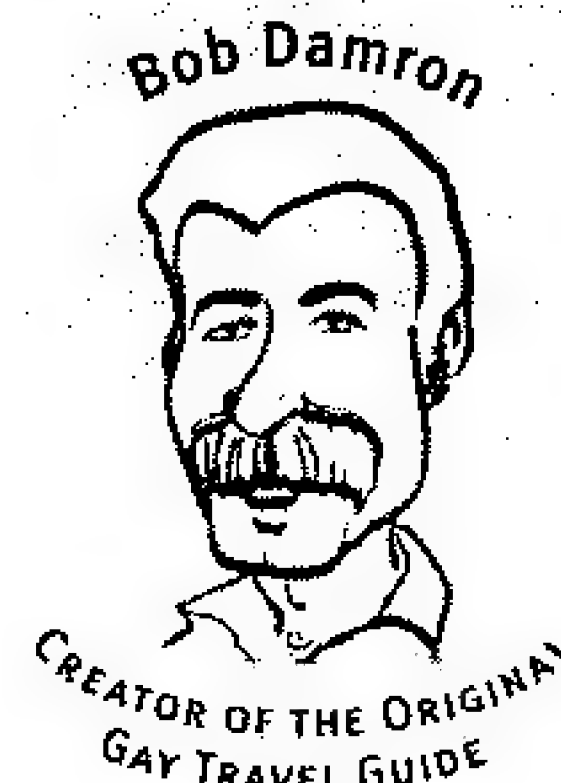
WAZOBIA: For women who love women and men who love men however they may self-identify, BGLT or questioning people from continental Africa. P.O. Box 255, New York, NY 10116 USA. 212-690-3705.

Anything That Moves is interested in listing international bisexual resources and projects that involve the entire community. To list your organization, please send complete contact information to:

Bi Resources Listings
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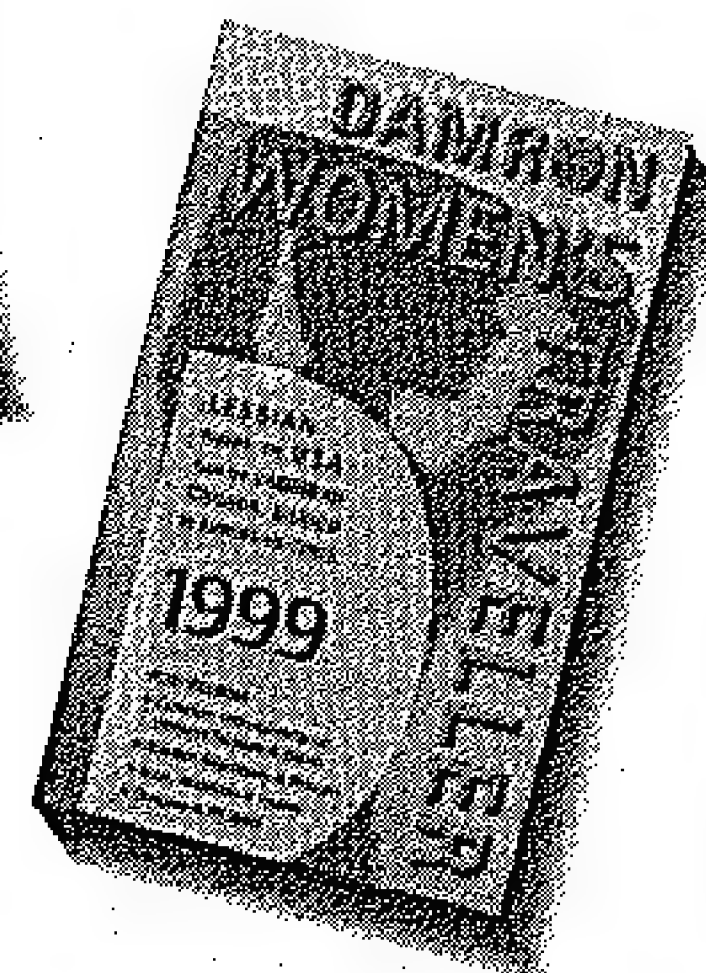
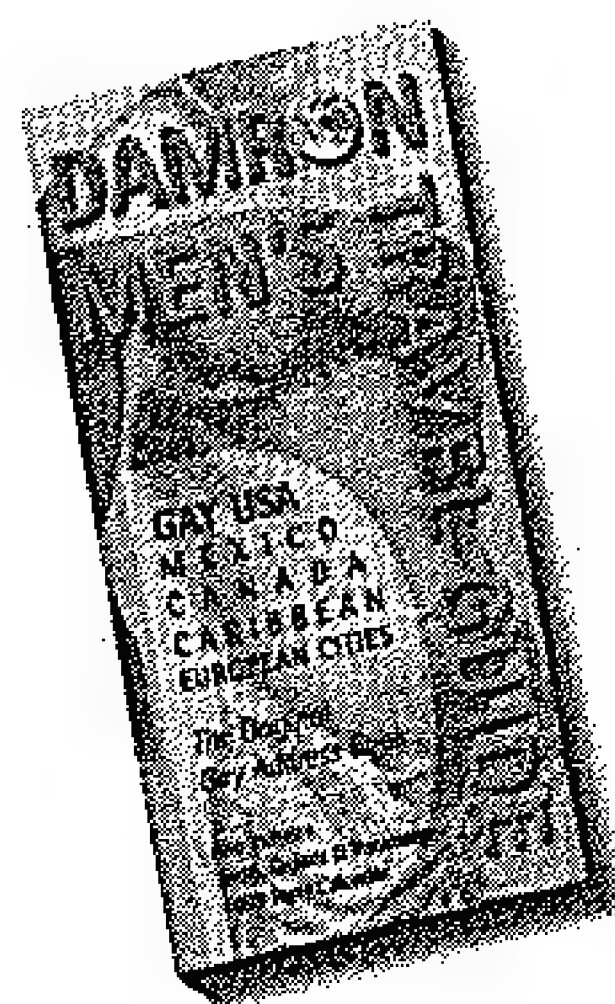
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Anything That Moves welcomes unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, and illustrations. We are particularly interested in work by bi-, pan- or similar-sexuals, people of color, transgender- or transsexual-identified, those who are differently abled, and those challenged by AIDS or HIV, as well as material not previously published and/or from new or unpublished writers.

WRITERS:

ATM accepts submissions such as literary, film, theater, and music reviews; fiction; non-fiction commentary and feature articles; and news reports on the bisexual community or individuals.

FEATURES & INTERVIEWS: *ATM* publishes features relating to any angle of bisexual life — cultural, lifestyle, spiritual, sexual, health, relationship, political... you name it. Please, 2,500 words or less.

FICTION/NON-FICTION: Any fiction content is up for consideration and need not address bisexuality specifically; however, bisexual content is given priority. *ATM* also provides space for writers to explore contemporary issues related to bisexuality that are editorial in nature — personal opinions and viewpoints. Please, 2,500 words or less.

REVIEWS: *ATM* publishes reviews of books, film, music, exhibits, theater, and anything else related to bisexual artists, topics, and/or themes as well as subjects of interest to bisexuals. Reviews should not exceed 400 words. Black & white photos or stats of reviewed book jackets, or black & white theatrical/portfolio promotional photos to accompany reviews, are greatly appreciated.

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Anything That Moves is seeking artistically verbose illustrators, artists, photographers and cartoonists. Erotic/nude photos will be considered. All photos containing models or subjects with identifiable and/or copyrighted likenesses must be accompanied by a signed photo release form and age statement. Illustrations may be submitted in electronic (TIF, JPG, or EPS, 600 dpi) form. Do not submit originals, as *ATM* cannot be responsible for them. Photographer's, designer's or illustrator's name, address, and phone number *must* be attached to the back of each submission. Contact Art Director Amy Conger at (415) 626-5069, or email artmail@anythingthatmoves.com for more information.

THE FINE PRINT, PART I:

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All submissions must be accompanied by a cover letter that includes a brief (30 words or less) biography of the writer and a listing of submissions by title. Please indicate if the contribution has been published or submitted for consideration elsewhere.

Send all submissions to: *Anything That Moves*: Submissions, 2261 Market St. #496, San Francisco, CA 94114-1600. Manuscripts may also be emailed to: submit@anythingthatmoves.com.

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Anything That Grooves still needs SF Bay Area-based volunteers to help throw Switchboard, our bi-monthly '80s/rock/techno dance party.

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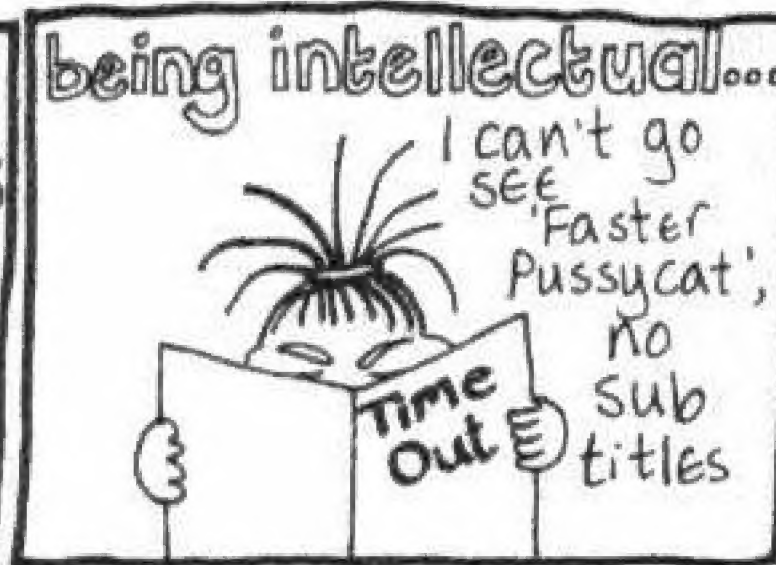
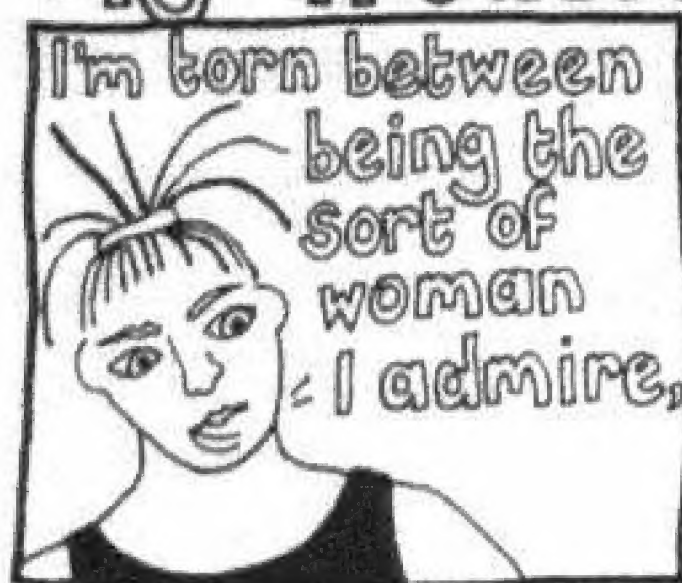
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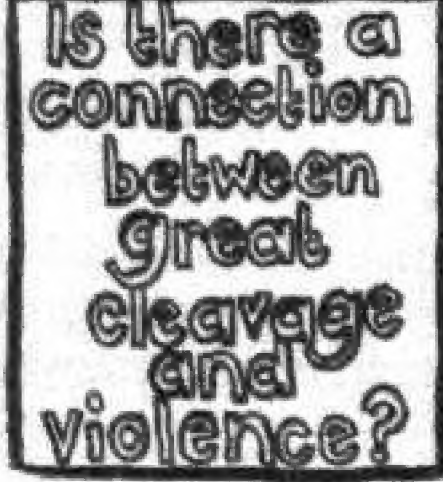
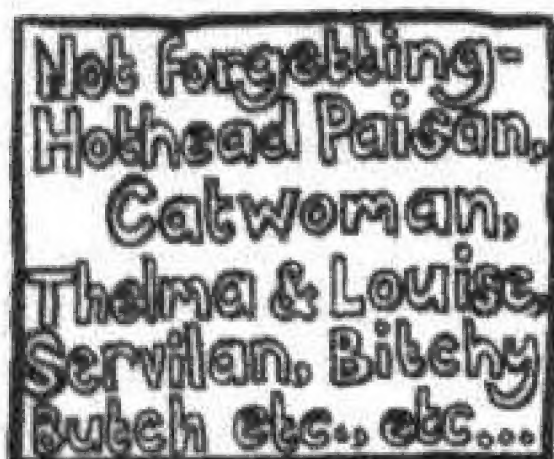
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Organizing**

**Anti-Racism:
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Thursday 11/11

**Defeat the
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Initiative!**

**GLBT Workers
in Allied Social
Movements**

**Community
Centers**

**Youth Raise
The Roof!**

**Sexual
Liberation and
Gender Identity**

**Philanthropy
and Social
Change**

**GLBT Workers
in Allied Social
Justice
Movements**

PLENARY SESSIONS

Thursday 11/11

**Politics Is A
Many Gendered
Thing**

Friday 11/12

**An Accessible
Movement**

Saturday 11/13

**Religion As An
Agent Of Social
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Sunday 11/14

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